and we are covenant to the word of God: To what purpose is this.

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A VINDICATION OF CHURCHES, COMMONLY CALLED INDEPENDENT:

OR

A BRIEFE ANSVVER to two Books; the one, intituled, *Twelve considerable serious Questions, touching* CHURCH-GOVERNMENT: The other, *INDEPENDENCY* examined, unmasked, refuted, &c. Both lately published by WILLIAM PRINNE, of LINCOLNES-Inne, Esquire.

By HENRY BURTON, a Brother of his, and late Companion in Tribulation.

MAT. 10. 34, 35, 36.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: And a mans foes shall be they of his owne household.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himselfe, and take up his crosse daily, and follow me. Luk. 9. 23.

Entred and printed according to Order.

LONDON;
Printed for *Henry Overton*, in *Popes-head Alley*. 1644.

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LONDON:

[illegible]

and no way covenant to the word of God: To what purpose is this.

To Mr. William Prinne, &c.

MY deare Brother, and late *companion in tribulation*, you propound your *twelve Questions to all sober minded Christians, cordially affecting a speedy setled Reformation, and brotherly Christian union in all the Churches*, (as you write in Front) and my selfe being one of these, (and no other you shall find me) doe with the right hand take your Propositions as made to me among the rest; craving your leave to returne you a brotherly Answer. And brotherly in nothing more, then by a candid and Christian dealing with you all along, and that also in a matter of such high moment, as concernes the *Kingdome* and glory of Jesus Christ. The zeale whereof is that alone, which puts me upon this task; it being otherwise far beyond my thoughts, that you and I, having been fellow-sufferers, and *spectacles to the world*, upon that tragicall stage of Antichristian tyranny, should ever come upon the

Theatre as Antagoniſts, one againſt the other, about the Kingdome of Jeſus Chriſt. But ſurely as an Antagoniſt againſt you I come not, but in the bowells of a brother. And had not the Book had your name in the Front, my ſtomack had not ſtooped ſo low, as to take it up or downe. But becauſe moſt men are apt to take all upon truſt, where they find Mr. *Prinnes* name engaged: and the Cauſe being ſo precious, as it hath by right taken up my whole heart, to become an Advocate to plead the excellency of it: I could not, though the meaneſt of all, but for the love of Chriſt conſtraining me, and by his grace aſſiſting, undertake this taske. Otherwiſe unwilling *in hoc ulcere eſſe unguis*, as the Roman Orator ſaid in another caſe. And this Anſwer was brought to the birth ſoone after yours: but it wanted a Midwife, whereof you have plenty. And I have had many interruptions. Nor am I ſo quick of foot, as you. But I may ſay, as *Ierom* once to young *Auguſtin*; *Bos laſſus fortiùs figit pedem.* And ſo in the ſpirit of love I come to your Booke.

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and un warrentable to the word of God: To what purpose is this,

A VINDICATION OF CHURCHES, COMMONLY CALLED *INDEPENDENT*.

YOu are for a *speedy accomplishment of a Reformation*. And so am I, and so our late *Covenant* taken, binds every man to begin with himselfe, and those under him, and each to prevent other in the worke. But yet this is sooner said then done. For * *shall a Nation be borne at once?* Shall a corrupt, prophane, polluted Land, not yet washed from her old superstitions, not yet wained from the *Ægyptian* fleshpots, not yet wrought off from the spirit of bondage, become all on a sudden a Reformed Nation? But yet *Optandum est ut fiat, conandum est ut fiat*, (to use *Augustins* words of the Conversion of the *Jewes*) *It were to be wished, and should be indevoured*. But as *Rome was not built in one day*, nor the mystery of iniquitie perfected in one day: so neither can *Rome* be so easily pulled downe in one day: nor can *England* become a Mount *Sion* in one day; first the old rubbish will require some time to be removed out of your Church-walls, but how much longer time out of mens hearts, where they have been so long, so fast incorporated? And you know, that the materialls of that typicall *Temple*, the timber, the stone, were all *hewed* first, and *squared*, before they came to make up the building. Therefore soft and faire. The People are generally ignorant of a right Reformation. A right Reformation is a setting up of Christs spirituall kingdome, first over the hearts and consciences, and then over the severall Churches. For this,

Pag. 2.

* Esa. 66. 8.

the

Zach. 1. 20. the * *Carpenters* and *Masons* must be set awork, godly and able Ministers must be sought out, and sought for of the Lord, to fit the crooked timber, and rugged stones, for the Spirituall Temple. For *England* is generally ignorant of the mystery of Christs kingdome; the Prelates usurped all, suppressed altogether this spirituall kingdome; no Ministers durst so much as mutter a word of it. Who durst say, that mens Consciences are subject to none, but Christ? That Christ is the onely Lawgiver of his Church? That the Churches of Christ ought not to be burthened with any humane Ordinances in Gods worship? That all humane rites and ceremonies invented by men, and imposed on men in Gods
* Col. 2. 23. service, are all a * will-worship, condemned by the Apostle? And the like. And yet wee deny not that every member in a Church is to be subject to the Officers thereof, holding out the Word, for conscience sake, *Heb.* 13. 17. Now if the People have not heard of Christ thus a King, no nor to this day in most Congregations of *England* doe heare, or understand any thing of Christs kingly Office over Consciences and Churches, as whereupon a right reformation doth principally depend: how can such a Reformation be speedily set up, when the preaching up of Christs Kingdome is altogether silent, as if Ministers mouths were not yet freed from their old muzzle? Therefore, I conceive, if the better heed be not taken, there may bee *more haste* to a *Reformation, then good speed*: when among so many Congregations, so many thousands in *England*, very few would be found to have on the *wedding garment*. A Reformation therefore, such as God requires, will necessarily require longer time yet, that we may not goe blindfold about it.

You tell us, that *importunitie of some reverend friends hath drawn from you your digested substance apprehensions of these distracting Controversies*. Who those reverend friends are, it matters not. But had I been accounted worthy to be reckoned among those *reverend friends*, to have been made acquainted with such a purpose, I should have used all *importunitie*, seasoned with strong reasons, to have dissuaded you from those *substance apprehensions*. And seeing I come to know them, though somewhat too late, in that they cannot be recalled; admit your selfe were *Aristotle*, and your friend *Plato*, yet I will say, *Amicus Aristoteles, Amicus*

Plato,

and no way congruent to the word of God: To what purpose is this,

Plato, ſed magis amica veritas. And therefore I muſt be plaine with you, otherwiſe I ſhould neither love you, nor your friend, nor yet the truth it ſelfe. To be plaine therefore, though I know you to be a very *Helua librorum*, of vaſt & indefatigable reading, and to have a ſtomack proportionable, of a ſtrong *digeſtion*: yet give me leave to tell you, as my loving and beloved friend and brother, that the ſubject you here deale with, is not of ſo eaſie a *digeſtion*, as that *ſubitanea*, or ſudden *apprehenſions* thereof may be well ſayd to be *digeſted*. Strong meats, you know, taken downe liberally into the ſtomack, doe require the longer time for a kindly *digeſtion*. And a *ſudden digeſtion* is apt to leave many indigeſted crudities, ingendring malignant humours in the body.

You *digeſt* your *apprehenſions* into *conſiderable Queſtions*, (as you call them) to be *ſolemnly debated by ſober minds*: but paſſing along (brother) I find your *Queſtions* turned into your owne reſolutions, ſo as in ſtead of *debating* them by *ſober minded men*, you foreſtall them, and tell us, that theſe *Independents*, (as you ſtyle them) *are guilty of Arrogancy, Schiſme, Contumacy, and liable to ſuch penalties, as are due to theſe offences, in caſe they ſhall not ſubmit to ſuch a publick Church-Government, Rites, Diſcipline*, as a Synod and Parliament *ſhall conceive moſt conſonant to Gods Word*, &c. And all along, your Queries are ſo *digeſted* by you, as that they caſt up a very ill ſent, if not rather a judiciall ſentence againſt thoſe Churches, which not *honoris cauſa* you name *Independent*. But we ſhall anſwer to the particulars, as they come in order. Thus much of your Proeme, or Preface.

Pag. 3. Qu. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

To your firſt *Queſtion*.

Before I punctually anſwer this, and ſo the reſt of your Queſtions, let me premiſe this, as an *Axioma*, which I muſt demand of you as due to my Profeſſion: that foraſmuch as you are a learned Lawyer, and able to ſpeake much of Lawes, and Cuſtomes of Nations, and Churches, and my ſelfe am a profeſſor of Divinitie, the Rules and Principles whereof are all of them layd downe in the Scripture, unto which alone all Queſtions about Faith and Religion are ſo reducible, and finally determinable,

ble, as who so denieth this, denieth the faith, and is not to be disputed with, as a *denier of Principles*: therefore I require of you, as a Christian brother, to joyne issue with me in this point, that all your Questions may be resolved by cleare Scriptures, and reason, evidently deduced from them; and this with all brevitie and perspicuitie.

* *Contra negantem principia non est disputandum.*

Now to your first question, the summe whereof is, *Whether every severall Nation, Republick, and Nationall Church, hath not under the Gospell a* * *liberty and latitude left them to chuse and settle such an orderly forme of Church-government, Discipline, and Ecclesiasticall Rites, as is most suteable to their particular Civill government, lawes, manners, customes, being not repugnant to the word of God. This being (as I conceive) a generally received truth among all Protestant Churches. And whether some things in all Church-governments, Discipline, Ceremonies whatsoever, are not, and must not be left to humane prudence, for which there is no direct precept nor pattern in sacred writ? Which truth is assented to by all particular Churches, whatsoever, in theory or practice.* This is the substance of your first *Question*.

* 1 Cor. 14. 40 & 11. 34.

Harm. of Confessions, sect. 10, 11, 26.

To which I answer: And first to your quotation of the Harmony, I will answer one for all. Sect. 16. August. Confessio 4. Traditiones de feriis, &c. *We condemne not* Traditions of *Holy dayes, of the Lords day, of the Nativity, of Easter, and the rest, for a politick end.* Here, you see, they put the *observation of the Lords day*, among *humane Traditions*, which I suppose you doe not approve. Again, they allow onely such observations, as God by *the Morall Law, and the voyce of Nature it selfe commandeth.* And thirdly, *That humane rites be not imposed*, Ne conscientiæ onerentur, *That mens consciences bee not burthened.* And in a word: To shape Religion in point of *Church-government, Discipline, Ceremonies, to every Nation, Republick, Nationall Church, and to Civill Government, Lawes, Manners, Customes, and so to humane Prudence*, (as you say) what is it but to *shape a coat for the Moone?* Whereas the Scripture holds forth unto us, but onely one forme of *Church-government, and Discipline*, which ought not to be altered according to the diversitie of *humane Lawes and Customes in all Kingdomes and Common-weales*, as you affirme. And whereas you make a proviso, *Always provided, every thing bee consonant*

Ibid. Observationes brevissimæ in totam Harmoniam. sect. 19. Append. sect. 10.

and no way repugnant to the word of God: To what purpose is this, when the very liberty you give of altering *Church-government and Discipline* as may be *suitable to humane Lawes and Customes*, is it selfe repugnant, and no way consonant to the word of God; as we shall shew by and by. This is * transformare Ecclesiam in humanam politiam, *to transforme the Church into a humane Politie*. * Hæ imaginationes omnibus ætatibus inde usque ab initio mundi nocuerunt Ecclesiæ, & semper nocebunt, *These imaginations, or fancies, have in all ages from the beginning of the world hurt the Church, and will always hurt*. Thus the Harmony. *

Now, brother, whereas you seeme to challenge us *infallibly to evidence* by any *Gospel Text*, that *Christ hath peremptorily prescribed one and the selfe-same forme of Ecclesiastical government, Discipline, Rites, to all Nations, Churches, in all particulars, from which they may in no case vary, under paine of mortall sin, schisme, or being no true Churches of Christ, with whom good Christians may not* safely *communicate*: First, what evidence from Scripture can you bring, why it should not necessarily be so? You would seeme to make this a ground why *Church-government, Discipline, Rites*, should be *alterable according to the severall lawes and customes of severall Nations*: Because (say you) *Christ enjoyned the preaching of the Gospel to all Nations and People whatsoever, who have their severall established different formes of Civill government, Lawes, Manners, Rules and Customes, suitable to their respective dispositions, Climes, Republicks*. By this reason you might argue, that therefore the Gospel it self may be preached variously, according to the variation of the climate *: and if not so, then (say I) neither is the *Church-government & Discipline to be varied according to the diversity of Nations, Lawes, Customes, Climates*. For, brother, the Church-government and Discipline now in the time of the Gospel, is a part of the Gospel, as being the Gospel-government, and Discipline of the Evangelicall Churches. And, brother, why should you think that Christ now under the Gospel, or New Testament, hath left a greater *liberty* to men to alter that form of *Church-goverment and Discipline*, which in the *New Testament* is laid down, then he did in the Old Testament under the Levitticall Law? What a strict charge did this Law-maker give to *Moses*? * See (saith he) *that thou doe all things according to the pattern*

* *Vide Appendices locorum, & ibid.*
* *Ibid.*
* See also the close of *Chaster. Homil.* in the Acts.

* Not but that we grant a variety in the method and manner in point of circumstance, so the substance be kept, as repentance from dead works, and faith towards our Saviour Iesus Christ: So in Church-government.

Exod. 25. 40. Heb. 8. 5.

the more *strict* and holy it will be found to be, and so the lesse *conformable* to the common prophane *manners* of this Nation at this day. Worthy of our observation is that of the Lord to the prophet *Jeremy*, Jere. 15. 19. *If thou take forth the precious from*

*But we doe not say that the same things are prescribed under the Gospel, nor doth it come to such circumstantialls; but we say, what it prescribeth, is to be kept.

shewed thee in the Mount, He must not vary one pin*. But some will say, When the Tribes of Israel were reduced under a kingly government, as in *Davids* time, the service of God was in greater state and externall pomp, when the Temple was built, then it was before in the Tabernacle; whereby it may appeare, that there was a liberty left to *David* to alter the forme of worship so, as was suitable to the Regall state. But I answer, Here was no liberty left to man to alter any thing in the worship of God, or in the *Church-government*. For God was so exact in this, that he would not leave it to *David* himselfe, though both a King and a Prophet, and a man after Gods owne heart, to set up what worship he pleased in the Temple, but God gave him an exact patterne of all, and that not onely by his Spirit, but in writing, that he might neither adde nor omit in the least tittle, 1 *Chron.* 28. And you know it was never left to the Kings of Judah, to doe the least thing in point of Reformation, but onely to see, that the Priests doe all strictly, (not any thing as seemed good to them, but all) according to the precise rule of the Law, 2 *Chron.* 31. Now was the great Law-giver so strict under the Old Testament, and is hee grown more remisse under the New? In *Ezekiels* vision of the Temple, or Church in the time of the Gospel *Ezek.* 43. 10, 11.) wee read of a patterne, forme, fashion of every particular thing of the House of God, which is his Church, exactly set downe and measured by Gods own speciall direction. Or are men more wise and more faithfull now then *David* was, that Christ should trust every Nation with such a liberty as this, to alter and diversifie *Church-government and Discipline*, so as might be most *agreeable* to this or that *Kingdomes, Common-weales, Countries customs, commodity, conveniencie*? And as for your *Nationall Church* here mentioned, we shall take a just measure of it when we come to your ninth Question.

And whereas you quote in the Margine, 1 *Cor.* 14. 40. & 11. 34. on which you ground your liberty to form your Church-government and Discipline suitably to each particular Civill gouernment: Alas, brother, these very Scriptures our Prelats abused to maintain their unlimited liberty of setting up their rites and ceremonies, as suteable to the Civill government; which absurdity

tered according to the diversitie of *humane Lawes and Customes in all Kingdomes and Common-weales*, as you affirme. And whereas you make a proviso, *Always provided, every thing bee consonant*,

surdity I have fully refelled in my *Reply to Canterburies Relation*. Whereas the Apostle there exhorteth, *that all things be done decently and in order* according to those rules they had received of him: to which agreeth the other place alledged by you, *Other things will I set in order when I come*, as Titus 1. 5. He left *Titus in Crete, that he might set in order the things that remained*; but all according to the Apostles direction for *Church-government*, and choyce of *Officers*. And we should have a mad world of it, if civill States in severall Countries should have liberty to frame Church-government and Discipline, as should most sute with their particular conditions. This liberty is that which both Ecclesiasticall and Civill States usurping, turned the spirituall Kingdome of Christ over Consciences and Churches, into a temporall and secular Kingdome, or rather indeed an Antichristian Tyranny, or Hierarchy, so as by this meanes it came to passe, that the *second Beast ascending out of the earth*, to wit, the Pope, (*Revel.* 13. 11.) commands the *inhabitants of the earth to make an Image*, that is, to set up a forme of Religion and *Church-government*, sutable to the *Image of the first Beast*, to wit, the Imperiall state of Rome. And thus came to be erected the *Hierarchicall Church-government*, in all pomp and points sutable with the Roman Monarchy. So dangerous is that libertie which brings such bondage. According to that, *Licentia summus omnes deteriores*: this brings not *liberty*, but *licentiousnesse*.

Your second Question is: *Whether if any Kingdome or Nation shall by a Nationall Councell, Synod and Parliament, upon serious debate, elect such a publick Church-government, Rites, Discipline, as they conceive to be most consonant to Gods word, to the Lawes, Government under which they live, and manners of their people, and then settle them by a generall Law; all particular Churches, members of that Kingdome and Nation, be not thereby actually obliged in point of * conscience and Christianity, readily to submit thereto, and no wayes to seek an exemption from it, under pain of being guilty of arrogancie, scisme, contumacie, and liable to such penalties as are due to these offences.*

* 1 Cor. 14. 32, 33. Rom. 13. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 32, 33.

I answer: That is, *Whether the Kingdome and Nation of England, &c.* The summe is, you would here make way for a politicall State Church-government, or a mixt Church-government,

the more *strict* and holy it will be found to be, and so the lesse conformable to the common prophane *manners* of this Nation at this day. Worthy of our observation is that of the Lord to the Prophet *Jeremy*, Jere. 15. 19. *If thou take forth the precious from*

partly, *according to Gods word*; and partly *to the lawes and government under which we live*; and partly, *to the manners of the people*. Humano capiti cervicem jungere equinam. Or, populo ut placerent, &c. Truly, brother, your very question is hereticall, you must pardon the expression, which otherwise would not come home to the full truth. And your word *Elect*, imports no lesse. For *Elect* taken in that sense, as you here apply it, to set up a forme of *Religion, of Church-government, and Discipline, with Rites and Ceremonies suitable to the lawes and customes of a State, and manners of the people*: and, *AS MEN CONCEIVE*, is of the same signification with *ἀιρεσις*, which signifieth a taking up an heresie upon humane *election*; or, as you say, *As they conceive*. For you say not, *Such a Church-government, &c. as is most consonant to Gods word*: but *such as they conceive to be most consonant*. So as you hang your *Church-government* upon mens *conceit*, or opinion of *consonancy* with *Gods word*, and not upon a reall and essentiall *consonancy*. Just like the Prelat of Canterbury, who in his *Relation* hangs the credit of the Scripture upon the Authour, and *the Scriptures have* (saith he) *of his sufficiency*. Which I have noted in my Reply. But thus you open a wide sluce, to let in an ocean of inundation of all sorts of Religion into all parts of the world, when every Religion shall be measured by the line of mans conception, what men *CONCEIVE agreeable to Gods word*. Thus might *Henry* 4. the late French King (to make his way the easier to the crown through so many difficulties) apostatize from the Protestant Religion, and turne to Popery, as *conceiving* it *suitable to the word of God*, to comply with the State of France, and the manners of the people, for the establishing of his Kingdome (as he *conceived*, though he was deceived) by becomming himselfe a Popish King. And so *Jeroboam* with his Counsell might *CONCEIVE* it agreeable enough *to Gods word*, to set up his *Calves* most *suitable* to the new *lawes* and *customes* of that *State*, and to the *manners of the people*, who are apt enough to embrace idolatry and superstition, as *Ephraim willingly walked after the commandement*, *Hos.* 5. 11. And so in the rest. Now that is an heresie which is an error *conceived* and maintained against the word of God. That the maintaining of such a liberty as you assume here, is so, we have in part shewed already from the Scripture, whence you are not

tered according to the diversitie of *humane Lawes and Customes in all Kingdomes and Common-weales*, as you affirme. And whereas you make a proviso, *Always provided, every thing bee consonant*

ticable to bring the least shadow of reason to maintain it. Nay, we need goe no further for the disfranchising of this your liberty, but your own words. Your words are *non-sense*, they cannot cohere in any true Theologicall sense. For first, we ought not to assume, or pretend a liberty, as left us of God, when we want our evidence, and are notable to produce our Charter out of the Magna Charta, the Scripture. And this, brother, nor you, nor any man can doe. Again, nothing is more presumptuous, then to attempt to mingle heaven and earth together, that is, to mingle Christs Kingdome with the Kingdomes of the world, or to these to frame and fashion that, which what is it else, but to set up a Babylonish *Church-government*. Did the Apostles thus? Did they frame Christs Kingdome and *Church government* to the *lawes* and *customes* of the *Romane Empire*? Or did they vary their orders for Church-government and Discipline, according *to the different manners and customes of those Nations, Countries, or Provinces* where they planted their Churches? Had they one order for the Church of Corinth, and another for the Churches of Galatia, and a third for the Churches of Asia and the rest? No: But **so ordain I in all Churches*, saith the Apostle. And ** concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do yee.* So also for making of Ministers and other Church-officers, Acts 1. & 14. 23.

* Cor. 7. 17.
* 1 Cor. 16. 1.

Againe, Your *Church-government* must be *conceived* to be *consonant to Gods Word*, yet with this restriction or limitation, that it be also *consonant to the Lawes and Government under which we live*. You speak indeed like a pure Lawyer, and one that will stand for your Profession, were this the way to uphold it. But cannot your Law, and our Gospel cotton together, unlesse the Gospel weare the Lawes livery, like to your Serjeants gown, made up of two severall colours; or unlesse Law and Gospel be woven together into a linsey woolsey garment? But what if your Law present, stand still in force for *Church-Government*, without being repealed? Must the *Gospel* be brought againe under your Prelaticall *Church-government*? Or rather why should not a *generall law* (to use your words) be enacted, to inhibit all formes of *Church-government and Discipline*, which are not every way *consonant to Gods Word*, without this addition, *And to the Lawes and Government under which we live*? For certainly, if the *Lawes and*

Government

the more *strict* and holy it will be found to be, and so the lesse *consonant* to the common prophane *manners* of this Nation at this day. Worthy of our observation is that of the Lord to the Prophet *Jeremy*, Jere. 15. 19. *If thou take forth the precious from*

Government of the State under which we live, be good and just, there is no need why you should put upon Christs kingly *Government* in his Church, such hard conditions, as not to be admitted, but so farre as it is consonant to mans lawes. As *Tertullian* said, when upon the Emperour *Tiberius* his motion to the Roman Senate, that Christ might be admitted and enrowled among *Romes* gods, & the Senate refused, because they had made a law, that none should be chosen for a god, unlesse first propounded by the Senate: *Ergo nisi homini placuerit, Deus non erit Deus*; *Therefore if it please not man, God shall not be God.* So let it be lawfull for me to say; *If it please not man, not the Senate, Christ shall not be King, his kingdome shall have no place in this or that Nation.* As if the good laws of a civill State, and the good laws of Christs kingdome, could not, ought not to stand together in their distinct formes unmixed; when certainly a State stands strongest, while most consonant to Gods Word, and to the *Church-government and Discipline* of Christ, and not when Christs kingdome and Government is made *suitable to the Lawes and customs of the State.*

Famous was that Answer of *Eleutherius*, Bishop of *Rome*, to *Lucius* King of *Britaine*, when this Country of *Britaine* first received the faith (being the first Province that received it) where the Gospel began freely to be preached, without impeachment or inhibition of the Prince (as the * Story saith) and that without any ceremonies at all: King *Lucius* sending to *Eleutherius* for some modell, or forme of Church-Government and Discipline: he received this Answer; *That Christ had left sufficient Order in the Scripture for the Government of the Church; and not onely for that, but also for the regiment of his whole Realme, if he would submit himselfe to follow that Rule. You require of us* (saith he) *the Roman Ordinances, with the Imperiall Statutes also to be sent unto you, which you desire to practise: The Roman lawes we may find to be faulty, but Gods lawes never. You have received of late through Gods mercy, in the Realme of* Britaine, *the law and faith of Christ; you have with you both volumes of the Scriptures: Out of them therefore by Gods grace, and the counsell of your Realme, take you a law, and by that law through Gods sufferance rule your Kingdome.* Now this *Eleutherius* being the 14th Bishop of *Rome*, by *Platina's* account, it shews unto us the

* *Hollinshed*, Description of *Britaine*, Chap. 7. About the year 187.

tered according to the diversitie of *humane Lawes and Customes in all Kingdomes and Common-weales*, as you affirme. And whereas you make a proviso, *Always provided, every thing bee consonant*

the great difference between that, and after-times, wherein the Mystery of Iniquity grew up to its height, in assuming such an unlimited liberty to set up such a Church-Government, and ceremonies of humane invention, as were haled in by the head and shoulders. But brother *Prime*, you see here, how in those purer primitive times, even the Bishop of *Rome* himselfe was so farre from admitting a Church-Government suitable to the severall lawes and customes of every Nation, (as you would have it) as he tels King *Lucius*, he hath both the Testaments, by the rule whereof he should not onely see the Church to be governed, but his own Realme also. *Ergo*, the Kingly government of Christ in his Church is not to be fashioned and moulded according to the lawes and customes of temporall and civill States, but contrarily the lawes of Civill States are to be reduced to the rule of Gods Word.

But you adde also, *And manners of their people*: that is, in their severall Countries, and Common-weales. Surely this reflects mine eye upon that Reformation begun in King *Edwards* reigne. But now what *Church-government* and *Discipline* was to be set up? Why, *the manners of the people* must be the line and plummet to regulate this building by. The *people* of England had been so long rooted in a superstitious Egyptian soyle: but because fat, and filling their flesh-pots with Onions and Garlick, they could the better brook the burthens which their Task-masters the Prelates inured their shoulders withall. And withall they must have their Masse-service, though translated out of the Roman into the English language. This in King *Edward* his letter to the Cornishmen, standing up for their Masse-book, stilled the babes when they understood the English Service-book was no other then the Romish Masse clad in an English weed, though since it hath put off many of those ragges, but not all it should. So much it importeth, to have an eye to the *peoples manners*, and how they stand affected. When the Lord *Cromwell* had set forth the *Primmer*, or *Psalter*, without the *Letany*, all the Popishly affected, which were not a few, could not be quiet till they had cried up the *Letany* again into its old place. So as in fine, through the love of superstition in the people, and the love of the world in the Prelats (*alias* the Reformers, many of whom afterwards

Fox his Monuments.

the more *strict* and holy it will be found to be, and so the lesse *conformant* to the common prophane *manners* of this Nation at this day. Worthy of our observation is that of the Lord to the [illegible] *Jeremy*, Jere. 15.19. *If thou take forth the precious from*

ward, God reformed and purged in the flames of Martyrdome) such a Reformation was set up, as for Church-government and Discipline (onely translating the Popes headship, and setting it upon the Kings shoulders) was the very same with that which in *Henry* 8. his dayes, and is at this day in Rome; and did so well suit with the *Civill Government* and *manners of the people*, that a *Generall Law* was enacted for the ratifying of that *Prelaticall Government and Discipline*, which hath bred such *manners in the people* generally to this day, as if another *Reformation* shall be set up, wherein the *peoples manners* shall be no lesse looked upon, then in the former (as you here doe more then seeme to plead for) I can conjecture, if not certainly divine, what a *Reformation* both for *Church-government and Discipline*, your *Church of England* is like to have. For if you aske the Prelaticall party, consisting of multitudes of their Priests, and of their ignorant and prophane people, together with all the Kings Army, they will all with one voyce and vote, roare it out at the Canons mouth, Wee will have the Bishops Church-government and Discipline continued without alteration. If yee aske the ordinary Protestant Profession at large, they cry, No, no; not that; but wee will have such a Church-government, as under which we may injoy no lesse libertie for our *manners*, then we had under the Prelates.

But you refer us to the *serious debate of a Nationall Councell, Synod, Parliament*. But yet give us leave to put a vast difference between all these, and the Scripture, Christs own voyce. If they truely informe us of the mind of Christ in the Scripture, we will blesse God for it: but yet if we can find out the mind of Christ by his immediate voyce, wee dare not suspend our belief and practise of it, untill we have it at the second hand from men. And should we wait never so long upon the issue of their debate, commended unto us to be such as men *conceive* to be agreeable and *consonant to Gods Word*: yet for as much as wee dare not *pinne our soules upon mens sleeves, as not knowing (as one said) whither they might possibly carry them: therefore wee must examine all mens determinations in matters of Religion by *searching the Scriptures, and laying every thing to this line and rule. For the *Bereans* are commended, as the more noble, in that they examined diligently and daily, even the Apostles doctrine

Cambdens Remains.

*Acts 17. 11.

tered according to the diversitie of *humane Lawes and Customs in all Kingdomes and Common-weales*, as you affirme. And whereas you make a proviso, *Always provided, every thing bee consonant*,

of the present times, and States: as suppose Prelaticall Spirits

doctrine by the Scriptures: and much more are wee to try the spirits of men, that are not Apostles, and so not immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost with infallibility of truth, as never any Generall Councell after the Apostles hath been. So as you know how miserably and shamefully Generall Councels have erred. The first Councell of *Nice*, consisting of 318 Bishops, how did they all agree to bring in a Doctrine of Devils, prohibiting Priests marriage, had not one Confessor, *Paphnutius*, by evidence of Scripture, and reason, cryed it downe, and so swayed the whole Councell? And you know very well, that Generall Councels, as well as Nationall, have not infallibilitie of judgement in all things. And it cannot be unknowne to you, that even this Assembly of Divines are of different judgements about Church-government and Discipline; nor have they perhaps had so much time since their being under the Prelacy, as to be thorowly informed of the way of Churches, commonly called *Independent*, but that many of them may possibly gaine much more knowledge of it, by spending some more time and study in it.

But Sir, besides all this, you seeme to lead them such a way, (should they follow you) as would necessarily bring them into an inevitable and inextricable errour, in case they should *elect* such a *publick Church-government, Rites, Discipline, as they conceive to be most consonant to Gods Word, to the Lawes, Government, under which we live, and manners of the people.* For if they looke upon the manners of the people, which they must needs find to be for the most part very loose (to speak nothing of Ignorants and Popish Malignants) some men might *conceive*, that such a *Church-government and Discipline* were most *suitable*, as doth most comply with, and give some indulgence to such manners, as cannot easily be brought to enter in at the *strait gate*, and *narrow way*, that *leads* into Christs kingdome. And whatsoever *Church-government* and *Discipline* comes not full home in all things to the word of God, is not that which is consonant thereunto, and so not pleasing unto God; and the more *consonant it is to Gods Word*, the more *strict* and holy it will be found to be, and so the lesse *consonant* to the common prophane *manners* of this Nation at this day. Worthy of our observation is that of the Lord to the prophet *Jeremy*, Jere. 15.19. *If thou take forth the precious from*

wards God reformed and purged in the flames of Martyrdome)

the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth; let them returne unto thee, but returne not thou unto them. Whereupon the most learned Interpreter (as the learned *Beza* constantly styles him) *Calvin*, among many other excellent observations on this place, thus concludeth; *Summa est, veritatem Dei non debere flecti ad hominum arbitrium, quia Deus non mutatur, ita nec verbum ejus ullam varietatem admittit:* The summe is; That the truth of God ought not to be bended according to mans will or conceit, because God is not mutable, so neither doth his Word admit of any change. Now the forme of Church-government and Discipline layd downe in the New Testament, is a Doctrine of Christ, and no more alterable according to the varieties of mens customes and manners in all nations and ages, then the Gospel it selfe is; which the Apostle would not have to be altered into another Gospel; though another Gospel cannot be; as neither another kingdome of Christ, another Church-government, another Church-discipline ought not to be, but that alone which we find in Gods Word, which must not be reduced or conformed (as a nose of wax, to which the Papists, as *Hosius*, and *Pighius* doe compare the Scripture) to the fashions of worldly government, (*Rom.* 12.2.) and popular *manners*, but these must be conformed to the Scripture.

Hence it may appeare, how rough your conclusion of this Question is, if to such a generall law, as you propose, all particular Churches, members of this Kingdome and Nation, should not yeeld to be actually obliged in point of *conscience, and Christianitie, and readily to submit thereunto, and no wayes to seek an exemption from it, under paine of being guilty of arrogancy, schisme, contumacy, and liable to such penalties, as are due to these offences.* Good Brother, be not so legall. What if that *resolution* of an *Assembly*, and that *Generall Law* for the confirmation of it, be such, as the conscience of godly people cannot without sin submit thereunto? Must they either violate their consciences, or be undone by your unavoydable intolerable penalties, as both to suffer in their good names for *Arrogant, contumacious Schismaticks*, yea and in their *Consciences too* under the *guilt of these*, and to be liable to I wot not what penalties besides? and no wayes to *seek an exemption* from it? Why, good Brother, if we should

of the preſent times, and States: as ſuppoſe Prelaticall Spirits

and live under the Turkiſh Government, and could not in conſcience turne Turkes in the Religion there by Law eſtabliſhed, yet there is a way to ſeek an *Exemption* from it, namely, by becoming Tributary to that State, as many Chriſtians doe.

Good Brother, let's not have any of *Dracoes* Lawes executed upon Innocents. And remember how not long agoe the Prelates ſerved us; we could not have the benefit of Law, of Appeale, no exemption from bloud-letting, and eare-cropping, and pillorying, &c. And ſhall wee now turne worſe perſecutors of the Saints, then the Prelates were? *Non ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco*, ſaid that heathen Princeſſe.

But in the margent you put ſome places of Scripture to prove this. But truly, when I well view the places, I find them not to anſwer to what you would ſeeme to prove by the Quotation. The firſt is, 1 *Cor.* 14.32, 33. *For the Spirit of the Prophets is ſubject to the Prophets.* And what of this? *Ergo*, the *Spirit* of all the *Prophets* in *England* muſt be *ſubject to the Prophets in the Aſſembly, upon paine of being guiltie of Arrogancy, Schiſme, Contumacy, and liable to ſuch penalties, as are due to theſe offences.* O brother *Prynne*, you muſt as well note, as quote the place. But let me note it for you. The Apoſtle there ſpeaks both to, and of the Church of *Corinth*, when aſſembled together in one place, that the Prophets ſhould obſerve order, and give place each to other in Propheeying; as the reaſon is rendred, and not of any ſuch Aſſembly of that ſublime and ſupreame Authoritie, or the onely Prophets, to whom all other Prophets whereſoever diſperſed muſt be ſubject. *Ver.* 33. *For God is not the Author of confuſion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints.* Which place alſo is no leſſe wide from your purpoſe. What? Will there be no peace, but all confuſion, unleſſe all be ſubject to the Aſſembly upon ſuch paine, as before? The Apoſtle ſpeaks here of the Order to be obſerved in every Church, as in all the Churches of the Saints. The other places quoted by you, are no leſſe miſapplyed. Will they prove, trow you, blind obedience?

But come on brother, (if you will needs put us upon ſuch hard exigents, as to give us no quarter, without preſent laying down both our Armes and cauſe, and ſo captivating our conſciences to the Dictates and Decrees of men; If you will make

wards God reformed and purged in the flames of Martyrdome)

1 Sam. 11. 2. no covenant with us, but upon this one onely condition, that you might thrust out all our right eyes; and if there bee no other remedy, yet give us leave to capitulate with you about some terms of accommodation, that we may not altogether betray our consciences and liberties, which our Redeemer Christ hath so dearly purchased for us. And the first and main is this: First, brother, make it cleare unto us, that an Assembly of men *learned, pious*, what you will, living in ages succeeding the Apostles, have, or ever had, infallibility of judgment, so as to say, (as Acts 15. 28.) *It pleased the holy Ghost and Us*, to make these Decrees, that so wee may without further scruple of conscience, submit & conform thereunto. But (I say) you must give us very good assurance and evidence hereof, that they are infallibly guided by the holy Ghost, that when they shall say, *It pleased the holy Ghost and Us*, we may safely believe them. For when you can resolve us of their conclusions no further, then as they conceive *to bee consonant to the word of God*: Alas! Sir, you leave us in a Wood, or Maze, whence no extricating of our selves, without *Ariadnes* thread, Gods word, to set us where we were before. For you know what variety of conceits many men have. *Quot capita, tot sententiæ.* This is the first and main condition we stand upon; and truly it were sufficient alone. We might in a second rank (but not equall to the former) name a selfe-deniall, an humble spirit, &c. You know the story of the Monkes of Bangor comming before *Austin* the first Archbishop of Canterbury, whom they seeing to sit in his Pontificall Chaire, and not rising up, nor moving unto them, they left him as a man not sent of God: And so, if we should behold men carrying themselves loftily over their brethren, who are not of their Councell, we should be apt to suspect that Christs Spirit is not there, because there is not the spirit of humility, nither the Spirit of truth to be found. A Cardinal in the Conclave at *Viterbium*, after almost three yeares agitation about the election of a new Pope, (as many yeares as we have been about to set up a Reformation, and the foundation not yet laid) each Cardinall ambitiously aspiring to be the Pope, one of them rose up and said, *Domine, &c.* let us uncover the roofe of this Chamber, seeing the holy Ghost cannot get in unto

of the present times, and States: as suppose Prelaticall Spirits

us through so many tiles. But this by the way. And so enough of this question.

The third and fourth Questions.

I come now to your third and fourth question. But lest my answers may prove too voluminous, and so fastidious to every-day-newes Readers, I shall in the rest contract my selfe. And this I must doe by trussing up your questions within the lists of a Syllogisme, respectively. For (as I noted before) all your questions are rather conclusive then interrogatory, rather positive resolutions, then unresolved questions. The summe therefore of your third and fourth questions (for this dependeth on that) is reduced into this Syllogisme: *Quest.* 3.

That which hath sufficient (if not best) warrant for it in the New Testament, the examples of the Primitive Church, &c. most prevents heresies, schismes, injustice; is to be received as a true and undoubted Church-government, and to be preferred before that, which hath no such expresse warrant in Scripture, no patterne for it in the Primitive, or best reformed Churches, &c. Proposition.

But the Presbyteriall form of Church-government, if rightly ordered, hath sufficient (if not best) warrant for it in the New Testament, &c. The Independent not so. Assumption: which takes up the fourth question.

Therefore the former is to be preferred and received before the latter, without any long debate. Conclusion.

The Answer.

Both your Propositions are lame and interfeere one against the other. Sufficient (if not best) warrant, will not prove so sufficient a warrant, as if there be found a better. And so your Argument, by crossing shins with it selfe, falleth to ground. Again, your Presbyteriall government hath neither best, nor any *sufficient warrant*, as we judge, in the New Testament, no nor any warrant at all in Gods word. But the true forme of Church-government hath both sufficient, and (without comparison) *best* warrant in the Scripture. And in truth, whereas you oppose

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Presbyteriall and *Independent* (as you call it) one against the other; let me tell you, that that which you call *Independent*, is the onely true, originall, and primitive *Presbyteriall*. Which *Presbytery* is proper and peculiar to every particular Church of Christ: and is not a Presbytery collective of many Churches by way of jurisdiction one, or many over each, or of a *National Church*, as you terme it. For neither of these can you finde either in the New Testament, or in the Old. In the Old we read of one Church, to wit, that of the Nation of the Jewes: But that whole Church was one entire congregation, Act. 7. 38. they had one Church-officer over all, it is called the *Tabernacle of the Congregation* in the singular; and they all assembled three times in the yeare at Jerusalem, in the Temple, where they offered Sacrifice, and not elsewhere: So as that Church was a type of every particular Church of Christ under the New Testament, as being both one entire Church and absolute, subject to no other form of government, but onely that of the only Law-giver and Mediator Jesus Christ; and no pattern of any such Nationall Church as you would have. Every particular Church now, consisting of visible Saints, is under Christ, as the onely *Head, King, Governour, Law-giver* of it, and so is subject to no other jurisdiction then that of Christ, his Spirit, his Word. Were there none other particular Church in the world, then one, as that of *Abrahams* Family, should it not bee a compleat Church, untill there were other Churches on whose jurisdiction it should depend? though for ordinary Families, they cannot have such a number as is requisite to make up a ministeriall body, & so are bound to unite to others for this end. Wee hold communion and consociation of Churches for counsell in doubts, and comfort in distresse: but we deny any such combination of Churches, as whereby the true liberty of every particular Church is taken away. And this communion of Churches doth no lesse (if not more) prevent *Heresies, Schismes, Injustice*, then your Presbyteriall. Nor can you shew reason to the contrary. And yet would you have our Churches more perfect then those of the Apostles own planting and gathering, as to bee altogether exempted from *Heresies, Schismes, Injustice*? Did not the Apostle tell the Church of Corinth, *There must bee Heresies even*

Cor. 11.

among

of the present times, and States: as suppose Prelaticall Spirits

among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest? And could those Primitive Churches after the Apostles, preserve themselves from *Heresies?* How soon did the whole world groan and wonder, that it was become an *Arriani?* And this within the fourth Century after the birth of Christ, when the Churches were governed by the Bishops and their Presbyteries. And how soon did the Kingdome of the Beast mount up to such a height, as it over-topt all the Western Churches, and brought them under his dominion?

And for our truly and properly Presbyterian Churches (your Independents) to which you deny expresse warrant in Scripture: the whole New Testament is both an expresse and ample witnesse on our side. All those particular Churches which the Apostles planted, were all of absolute authority amongst themselves respectively, and equall one to the other. You can shew us no one rule or example to the contrary. That in Act. 15. is a transcendent, and stands alone, not to be paralleld, and therefore very impertinently objected by many, before you, as we shall have occasion to shew afterwards.

And for patern in the Primitive Churches after the Apostles, we are not curious to seek it in the corrupt current of succeeding ages, when we find it in the pure fountain. It appeares, by the *Centuriists, Cent. 1. c. 7. Tit. de consociatione Eccles.* that the government of Churches in the second hundreth yeare, was almost popular, every Church had equall power of ordaining or casting out, if need were, those Ministers they had ordained, with other things very materiall in that whole Title, as also in the Title *de Synodis privatis*. And for the best reformed Churches, if in them we cannot find that pattern so fully followed as the Scripture holds forth unto us, we crave leave without prejudice, to take it as we find it in the Word, without the least variation. And you may know, in the beginning of Protestant Reformation, could they so clearly see in the dawning, as wee may now in the meridian, if we will but open our eyes? The reformed Churches have taken up one or other of them upon the matter the main things we contend for: 1. The Church of Holland receive none to the Table, nor have a vote as a member of that Church; but such as first give satisfaction to the Eldership,

and

wards God reformed and purged in the flames of Martyrdom

and then to the Congregation: and 2. have a form of covenant propounded by them. Secondly, the French Churches exercise excommunication in their particular congregations, though with liberty of appeale. And this was the government of the Primitive Churches in the 2d hundreth yeare, as appears, *Con. 2. c. 7. Tit. de Synodis:* but especially, *Tit. de consociatione Eccles.* So as no long debate need to be, if but Christs word alone may take place, without the necessary accommodation of humane *Lawes, Customes, Manners of the people,* as you doe plead.

And lastly for appeales in case of *Injustice*, you know, brother, that if injustice be done in any civill matter, if redresse may not be had by the mediation of the Church, whereof the parties are members, then the Law is open there to appeale for justice. And if it be about the Churches censure for some miscarriage of a member towards the Church, or any member therof, if the censure be unjust, the party grieved may desire to have his cause heard by some other Churches, who may accordingly deal with their Sister-church to require a brotherly account of the whole businesse, as is the dutie of all the Churches in such cases. And if it be in matter of opinion, here the appeale lies principally and in the first place, to the Scripture, as the supreme Judge; and if the thing be obscure, and too hard for that Church to resolve by the Scripture, then to call in the help of other Churches for their best information. And in summe, brother, there is no case can fall out in any Church, which hath not as many helps by a free communion of Churches, wherin every Churches peculiar liberties & priviledges are preserved as they ought to be: as any you can name to be in your obligatory combination of Churches, wherby the liberty of each Church is by comon consent sold over to others, by which it ceaseth now to be a free Church of Christ, under his onely jurisdiction and government. So as hereby great mischiefes may redound even to the purest Church, when once things come to be carried by the vote of a generall or Classicall Assembly of Divines, swaying things besides the Rule, and stretching them beyond their line. And therefore famous was that saying of *Nazianzen*, "*That he never saw any good to come of generall Councels*; because commonly Camelion-like they change their line with the neerest object, complying with the condition of

" See *also Nicolaus de Clemangiis, Super materia Concilii generalis, circa initium. Non oportet nos Ecclesiæ triumphanti, Ecclesiæ titulos aseribere, ut infallibilis sit, &c.*

of the present times, and States: as suppose Prelaticall Spirits should turne to be your Presbyterians, or as when (in case the Lord Christ shall resume his kingdome over his Churches in a civill State) we should perhaps see some of your Presbyterians as fast to turne Independents, were the Preferments sutable.

But some may object, that one Church standing by it selfe, is more subject to fall into errour, then when combined with other Churches. *Obj.*

To which I answer; That every particular Church injoying its own freedome, without any injoyned combination with other Churches, may much longer preserve it selfe from danger of errour, when it hath its free choice in matters of difference or difficulty, to consult onely with those Churches, which it knows to be most sound & orthodox, then when it is fast bound, and incircled with this or that combination of Churches, being in number twelve or twenty, or more or lesse, whose votes must carry every controversie, according to the severall humors of such and such at all adventure. And (brother *Prynne*) the world is not so plentifull of sound spirits, as to supply every Hundred in the Land with twelve or twenty able and godly Ministers to be of a combination. Nay, you may observe what poore shifts are used for the supplying of places with godly and able Ministers, which are growne so geason, that the Citie now is faine to be supplyed with plundred countrey Ministers, in stead of their out-cast Malignants: And suppose all these to be as good as they should be, where shall those Country-places be supplyed? And besides, such is the penury of good Ministers (if not of care to provide better, if possible) that such as are for their demerits cast out of one place, are (for I wot not what merits) put upon some other people, where their good qualities are not knowne. Being such, as verifie the Proverb, Οὐ τὸν τρόπον, ἀλλὰ τὸν τόπον μεταλλάττων; They change their mansion, but not their manners. And besides all this, he is one very meanly gifted now adayes, that will be wooed and won to take a Benefice under a hundred or fixscore pounds. And brother, why should godly Ministers indeed be yoked with such earth-wormes, and Mammonists, as are in some Parishes, and as some of your Presbyterian combinations would necessitate us unto? If you say, if things goe amisse *Answ.*

"vernment, to which particular congregations, persons, ought to
"be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the NOVEL
"INDEPENDENT INVENTION.

in lesser Classes, they may be remedied in a generall Assembly: then I say, there is the like reason of a generall Assembly, that there is of all the severall Classes put together. For, *totius & partium eadem est ratio*; if all the members be corrupt, so also must the whole body be. Therefore the case must needs be hard, when one or two Churches in a classis or combination, that are sound, should be bound to the decisions of the rest, being unsound; and so for the Generall Assembly in the like proportion.

The fifth Question.

It is reduced thus;

Proposition. That, whose grounds and reasons tend inevitably to endanger, overthrow, and embroyle Ecclesiasticall or civill formes of Government, ought not to be suffered.

Assumption. But such is the Independent Church-Government: it tends inevitably, &c. Therefore it ought not be suffered.

I deny the Assumption: The grounds and reasons of true Church-government, do not in their own nature tend to the indangering, overthrowing, and embroyling of Ecclesiasticall or civill formes of Government. (*Harm. Confess. sect.* 11. of the confess. of *Ausburg, art.* 7.) Power Ecclesiasticall no more hindreth the civill, then the skill of musicke, neither is it to be confounded with civill. And (*ibid.*) They (to wit, the Prelates) transforme the Church into a humane Government. For they would doe all in imitation of civill Government. But if they produce any such effect, it is onely accidentall, and the maine cause is in such Ecclesiasticall or civill bodies, when they shew some antipathy in their constitution to Christs kingdome and government, by their opposing or oppressing of it. Hereupon Christ saith *, *Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.* And it was the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdome, both by Christ, and his Apostles, for which they were exclaimed against, and persecuted, as troublers of the State, both Ecclesiastick and Politick, as *movers of sedition*, and *perverters of the people*, and the like. And will you thereupon conclude, that the preaching of the Gospel, and setting up of Christs kingdome in his Churches, is a trouble of the

* Mat. 10. 34.

Luk. 23. 2. 14. Act. 24. 5.

that saying of *Nazianzen*, *That he never saw any good to come of generall Councels*; because commonly Camelion-like they change their hue with the neerest object, complying with the condition of

the State, and a *mover of sedition*, and a *seducer of the people*, because Hierarchicall Government hath an Antipathy with Christs spirituall kingdome, and Church-government?

The sixth Question.

The summe whereof is:

That which from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel downwards, till this present age, had no being in the world, can doubtlesse be no Church-Government of Christs, or his Apostles. *Proposition.*

But such (say you) is the Government of Independent Churches. *Assumption.*

Therefore not Christs, or the Apostles Church-government.

I deny your Assumption. And for further answer thereto, I referre you to my Answer to your third and fourth Question, where is clearely proved, that all the Churches founded and planted by Christ and his Apostles, were in themselves respectively absolute and free Churches, which though they had communion with all their sister-churches, yet you can never prove your classicall, or Synodicall jurisdiction of either a Provinciall Church (as you call it) or a Generall Councell over every particular Church, to have the least footing, or beeing at all in the Scripture. 2. In the Ecclesiasticall Histories for the first 200 yeares we finde (as was noted above) sufficient ground for it; but none for the combined coercive Presbytery; let that be shewn afterwards indeed, as times grew worse, you find your *Patriarchall, Metropoliticall, Prelaticall, National, Provinciall Church-governments, Generall and Provinciall Councils*, subordination and subjection of the lesser Churches to the greater, by which very means the Papall Antichristian kingdome came gradually to be erected; (as is noted before) but can you shew us the least print of one foottstep in the Word of God of any such Hierarchy, or of any such subordination and subjection of one Church to another? And if the mystery of iniquitie began to worke even in the Apostles own times, which was the very Hierarchy it selfe, in the affectation of Primacy; as we see practised by *Diotrephes*, who is noted to be φιλοπρωτευων, a lover of Primacy, 3 Joh. 9, 10.

verument, to which particular congregations, persons, ought to be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the *NOVEL INDEPENDENT INVENTION.*

macy, or preheminence, and that even above the Apostle John himselfe; with other like sutable practises: This mystery growing up and spreading mightily by degrees, after the Apostles were dead, and so prevailing as a generall deluge over the face of the earth, as nothing could be seene but Diocesan Bishops seat, overflowing every where: therefore were there never such Churches extant. But suppose there were no examples to be found of it in Church Story, which yet we have proved the contrary, nevertheless, you know brother, when a mans evidences of lands are lost, there be publick Records, as the *Rowles of Chancery*, where they may be found againe. And if there they be found, will you not allow them, because the man cannot otherwise shew them? Now wee have the sacred Scripture, where our Evidences are safely recorded. Suffice it then, that there we shew them. The contrary opinion doth manifestly establish Traditions unwritten, as the Papists doe. And to give the Reader some intimation how the Churches of Christ came in time (and that in short time after the Apostles) to lose their liberties; I crave leave of you to note that passage in *Ambrose* (who lived within the fourth Century) upon 1 *Tim.* 5. Synagoga, & postea Ecclesia, &c. *The Jewes Synagogue, and afterwards the Christian Church had Elders, without whose Counsell nothing was done in the Church. Which by what neglect it grew out of use, I know not, unlesse it were perhaps the sloath, or rather pride of the Teachers, whilst, alone, they would seeme to be some body.* So *Ambrose* the Bishop of Millan confessed. I confesse I cannot shew many such instances or records, as perhaps your selfe in your multifarious reading may observe: But this one, from such a reverend and ancient Author too, of pious memory, may serve in stead of many; considering also that this is the greater rarity, and antiquity, and much to be wondred at, how it escaped the expurgatory *Index*, by those that were the first fathers of the mystery of iniquity, that they did not quite expunge this record also, that not a pin of the old patterne should remaine. Now that the Church this Ancient there speaketh of, was a particular Congregation, answerable to the Synagogue, governed by the Counsell of its own Elders, cannot be denyed. Whereby all men may clearly see, in how short a time the government of Churches, instituted by Christ and his Apostles,

Synagoga, & postea Ecclesia seniores habuit, quorũ sine consilio nihil agebatur in Ecclesia. Quod qua negligentia obsoleverit nescio, nisi Doctorum desidia, aut magis superbia, dum soli volunt aliquid videri. Comment. Ambrosii in cap. 5. Epist. ad Tim. 1a.

that saying of *Nazianzen*, *That he never saw any good to come of generall Councels*; because commonly Camelion-like they change their hue with the neerest object, complying with the condition of

Apostles, came to be changed from being free Churches, to become servile and subject to the usurpation of the greater, the Prelates and their Clergy now making up the Church, as if the congregations themselves were no Churches, as being stripped of all their Rights and Priviledges, yea and of Christ their King, his Kingdome now being turned into an Oligarchy, or Oligarchicall Tyranny, mixed of two of the worst forms of Government; though you seeme to put Oligarchy in the ranke of the best; but I suppose you would have said, instead of Oligarchy, (having named Monarchicall, and Aristocraticall) Democratie: Oligarchy being heterogeneall to the other two. But enough of this.

The seventh Question.

Thus reduced: Those Churches, which doe not conforme their Church-government to some one or other publick forme of Civill Government, dividing themselves into many Parochiall Churches, Dioceses, Provinces, but doe gather Churches not out of Infidels, but of men already converted to, and setled in the Christian faith, and doe admit them into the Church by way of Covenant; no one example, or direct Scripture, Reason, or Authority can be produced, to satisfie conscience of the lawfulnesse of them. *Proposition.*

But such are the Independent Churches, they doe not conforme as afore: Therefore conscience cannot be satisfied of the lawfulnesse of them. *Assumption.*

The Argument (or Question) contains many branches, scarce reducible to one head; but I have bundled them in one coard, as well as I could. And for answer, first this Question is coincident with all that went before, and so is already in that respect answered. Secondly, Your parallel betwixt the civill association and Ecclesiastick, is not grounded on Scripture, for neither God taught, neither the Churches practised any such necessary union and dependance of one Church on another, though they might, have done it, and had need of it, as being in times of persecution (which hindred it not; no more then it doth in *France* now) 2. You confidently affirm, that all Ecclesiasticall Histories testifie so

"vernment, to which particular congregations, persons, ought to "be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the *NOVEL* "*INDEPENDENT INVENTION.*

so much, which is manifestly untrue, as hath been shewed before. 3. Though Churches springing out of other Churches had dependance on them, what is this to Churches that are far distant one from another, and never had such a ground of relation one to another? Besides the Harmony of Confessions, which you quote for you, (though I finde not that in those places they say any thing to the point) yet Sect. 11. cap. of the *Keyes*, that the *Keyes* are committed to each particular, even the least Ecclesiasticall Society. Thirdly, Christs true Churches here on earth, are not to be *limited to this or that place; as, because there are so many Parishes, Dioceses, Provinces, in a civill State, therfore those must be so many fixed, Parochial, Diocesan, Provincial Churches. And here, brother *Prynne*, would you reduce (*tanquam ex postliminio*) the Provinciall, Diocesan, Parochiall Church-government, to the same forme it had before? Would you have the Provinciall Archbishops, with their Diocesan Bishops, and Parochiall Clergie, or Priests set up again? For a Province hath relation to its Provinciall, and a Diocese to its Diocesan, and a Parish (to speak in the old Dialect) to its Parish-Priest. *Da veniam verbo.* And as for division of Provinces, Dioceses, and Parishes, into so many Churches, you know where and when it began. For in the yeare 267. *Dionysius* Bishop of Rome made this division: which division turned the Churches into a Babyloniſh confusion; when now all that dwelt together in every Parish, and so in every Dioceſe, whoever they were, tag and rag, must make up a Church, as so many members doe one body: whereas the Churches planted by the Apostles, were called & gathered out of the wide world, where the word of God came, and took place. So as not every Citie became a Church, but so many as were called in every citie. *Paul* writes not to all in *Corinth*, but to the Church there, consisting of the Saints only.

* Ioh. 4. Acts 10.35. Matth. 18.20.

Polydor Virgil de Inventorib. rerum. lib. 4. cap. 9.

1 Cor. 1. 2. so Rom. 1. 7. so Ephes. 1. 1. &c.

But you object the gathering of Churches, not of Infidels, but of men already converted to, and setled in the Christian faith, of which forme of congregating Churches, you say you could never discern example, or any direct Scripture to satisfie conscience. We would gladly say Amen to that assertion, that the whole Nation is Christian, established in the faith; but if not, you dispute *ex falso supposito*. May it please you then, brother, to

that saying of *Nazianzen*, *That he never saw any good to come of generall Councels*; because commonly Camelion-like they change their hue with the neerest object, complying with the condition of

to take notice of the example both of *John Baptist* and of Christ himselfe, and of the Apostles, who* all of them did call and gather Christian Churches out of the Jewes Church: which might suffice to satisfie any mans conscience in this point; and so much the more, when they consider this is a time of Reformation, and we have all taken a covenant each to goe before other, in reforming not onely our selves, but all others within our line, according to the word of God. And again, the case between our Reformation at this time, and that of the Jewes Church, is much alike: For as that was the Gospel-reformation, so is this; as that was a gathering of such Churches out of that of the Jewes, as acknowledged Christ to be their onely King and Law-giver, to govern Consciences and Churches by his Word, when the rest of that Church, even the main body of it, did reject Christ, and renounce him for their King, this being the very Title set over him on his Crosse, for which they crucified him: So the preaching up of Christs Kingdome in these dayes, is that which calleth and gathereth those unto Christ, who acknowledge him alone for their King to govern them; & this out of those, that doe not, or will not submit unto his Kingly government, but depend upon the sole determination of men, what kind of Church-government they will set up in the Land, which you tell us must be *suitable to the lawes and customes of the Realme, and manners of the people.*

* Mat. 3. 5. 7. Joh. 4. 1. Acts 2. 40.

But there is yet one thing more, for which you say, you can see no ground, and that is a particular *Church-covenant.* Why, brother, why should the lawfulnesse of this be doubted, whether explicit or implicit? It is the Churches wisedome and care, yea, conscience and duty too, as we humbly conceive, to admit of none but such as can give some account of the work of grace wrought in them, though but in the least degree, yet in truth, so far as we may discern them to be Saints: for such only are fit members of a Church, or body of Christ, so as to partake of those holy Ordinances of Christ, which none but visible Saints ought to partake of. And who are fit to receive the Seales of the Covenant, but such as professe to be in covenant? And surely if any shall refuse to make this profession of their being in covenant, as being ashamed thereof, with what conscience can the Church

" verument, to which particular congregations, persons, ought to
" be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the *NOVEL*
" *INDEPENDENT INVENTION.*

Church admit them into fellowship? And you know this is a time of Reformation, and we have long been under a yoke of Antichristian-government, and of humane ordinances in the worship of God; wherein we have all violated our vow & covenant made in our names in our Baptisme: Now, doth not reason require, that we should renew our covenant in our own persons, when we come to enter into the way of reformation, and that in as full a manner as possibly we can? And when the people of God came out of Babylon to inhabit Jerusalem again, they made a covenant among themselves, when seeking the way Jerem. 50. 5. *with their faces thitherward, they say, Come and let us joyn our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall covenant that shall not bee forgotten.* The case is ours in a great measure, who are now inquiring *the way to Sion, with our faces thitherward*; and shall we be abashed to come to Sion from all the reliques of Babylon, and not incite one another, as they did, to enter into a perpetuall covenant with the Lord Christ, as our onely King, not to be forgotten? And the like wee read *Ezra* 10. 3. and *Nehem.* 9. 38. so did King *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 12. Now if any require an example hereof in the New Testament, I answer, what needs it, when wee have it in the Old? What example have wee in the New Testament for * Gen. 17. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. baptizing of Infants? yet having a * commandement in the Old for circumcising the Infants of beleeving *Abraham*, as being included in the same covenant with faithfull *Abraham*, the intaile of this Covenant never yet cut off, but reaching to all *Abrahams* Rom. 4. 11, 16. seed, walking in the steps of *Abrahams* faith now under the Gospel; infants of beleeving parents professing to be in covenant, have the same right unto baptisme, as being within the covenant, which the infants of beleeving *Abraham* had unto circumcision (instead whereof baptisme by Gods institution succeeded) and this by a strict charge and command from God (*Gen.* 17. 13, 14.) which is as strong now for baptizing of Infants of beleeving parents, as it was to the infants of beleeving *Abraham* for circumcision. Again, what example, yea or precept is there of giving women the Lords Supper in the New Testament, yet upon good consequence it is drawn from thence. But this by the way. And to conclude this point, what reason can any man bring against this particular Church-covenant? And if any doe dislike

be- that saying of *Nazianzen*, "*That he never saw any good to come of*
llibi- *generall Councels*; because commonly Camelion-like they change their hue with the neerest object, complying with the condition

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distrelish it, they are onely such as take a disgust of the way it selfe; and then no marvell if every thing about it be quarrelled and questioned, though no other reason can be given of it, but a *Nolumus*: such as the Jewes gave when they said of Christ, *Nolumus*: **We will not have this man to reigne over us.* Which speech was the more notorious, as being delivered by an *Embassage*, a solemne act of State of the Eldership, and they his own Citizens, though a little after (vers. 27.) he declares them his enemies, and for this very thing, that they would not hee should reigne over them, commandeth them to be brought and slain before him. But this by the way, though not unworthy of wise mens sad observation.

* Luke 19.14 Οὐ θέλομεν τοῦτον βασιλεῦσαι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς

Object. But it will be said, we have covenanted already in the Nationall Covenant.

Answ. This is against things upon supposition, that wee were convinced of the evill of them, but not about our own persons, as enquiring whether wee indeed are willing to give up our selves to the Lord Jesus. 2. This was put in by such outward authority, that many for fear took it, which a Church-covenant under the Gospel (where the people are to be such as come willingly) will not beare; for under the Law indeed there was another order, but appointed by God, that they might bee forced to the covenant that they had received in their fathers: but our fathers were over-awed, and secondly, no such order now.

The eighth Question.

This question, though somewhat involved and perplexed with many branches, yet the scope being to prove a Nationall Church, and so a common Presbyterian Classicall government, to which particular congregations, persons, ought to be subordinate, and thereby an apparent subversion of the Novell Independent invention. (These are your words.)

The whole I reduce into form thus:

"Where there bee infallible proofes of Nationall Churches, *Proposition.*
"there of necessity must be a common Presbyterian, Classicall go-
"vernment, to which particular congregations, persons, ought to
"be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the *NOVEL*
"*INDEPENDENT INVENTION.*

Church admit them into fellowship? And you know this is a

Assumption " But there be infallible proofes of Nationall Churches; as the " Catholick Church, the Nationall Church of the Jewes, the Sy- " nodall Assembly of the Apostles, Acts 15. who made and sent " binding decrees to the Churches; seconded with all Oecume- " nicall, Nationall, Provinciall Councels, Synods, and the " Church-government exercised throughout the world in all " Christian Realmes, States, from their first reception of the Gos- " pell, till this present; compared with twelve places of Scripture " at the least, &c.

Conclusion. " Therefore there must be of necessity, a common Presbyterian, " Classicall government, to which particular congregations, per- " sons, ought to be subordinate, to the apparent subversion of the " *Novell Independent Inventions.*

Now for answer to this large Argument, briefly: And first, to the Proposition. I deny that you can bring any infallible proofs, or one proof, that there either are, or ever have been any Nationall Churches by any other institution, but meerly humane; nor any one of divine institution, but onely that of the Jewes in the old Testament, and now wholly dissolved; of which we have spoken sufficiently before: And which also was not onely National, but in a manner Oecumenick and universall, as appeares Acts 2. and such therefore as I hope you contend not for now; for then there would be a Pope, as there was an high Priest then, &c. And, brother, you must give us leave to stand upon this, as for our lives, that we dare not admit of any Churches, as the true and genuine Churches of Christ, which are not of his owne institution, that is, such as are not called and gathered by the voyce of Christ in his word, and by that Scepter of his swayed, and by that alone Law of his governed. And therefore be intreated, good brother, not to presse upon us such your Churches, whose not only institution in their severall divisions, but government also in their combinations, is meerly humane, and therefore as a house founded on the sand, which against a storme cannot stand. You must first be able to found your Nationall Church in the Scripture, or assure your selfe, if a man will build upon it a common Presbyterian Classicall government, and dwell there, hee will bring an old house upon his head, when God shall begin to storm it.

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But to come to your particular instances in the Assumption, for the proofe of your Nationall Church. The first is, the Catholicke Church throughout the world. What is this to a Nationall Church? Though the Catholick include all true Churches throughout the world, yet doth it not therefore conclude any Church to be Nationall.

The second instance is, the Nationall Church of the Jewes, and from hence you can conclude as little for your Nationall Churches; as before we have shewed. For bring us any one Nationall, that is one intire Church, or congregation, as that of the Jewes was: or, that is of one family, as that was: or, that is a type of Christs spirituall Kingdome, as that was: or, that is the universall Church of God visible on earth, as that was: or, that is governed by the like lawes, that that was: when your selfe doe confesse, that the government of your Nationall Churches is to be regulated by *humane Lawes, Customes, Manners*, and not by Gods word alone; whereas that of the Jewes was wholly governed by Gods own Law, and not at all by the Lawes of men, untill it came to be corrupted, contrary to the expresse Law of God. And you confesse also, that the government of your Nationall Churches is alterable, according to the *Lawes, Customes, Manners of severall Nations*: whereas the government of the Church of the Jewes was unalterable, till Christ himselfe did put a period to that Oeconomy. In a word, your Nationall Churches are a mixed multitude, consisting for the greatest part of prophane persons, being as a confused lump, whereof there are nine parts of leaven to one of pure flowre, so as the whole is miserably soured, and the flowre made altogether unsavoury: But that of the Jewes, in its naturall and externall constitution, was all holy, * *an holy Nation, a Royall Priesthood, a peculiar People*, * all the congregation holy, every one of them: So as in no one particular, doe your Nationall Churches hold parallell with that of the Jewes, no not in the least resemblance.

* Exod. 19. 5, 6.
* Num. 16, 3.

Your third instance is the *Synodall Assembly of the Apostles, Elders, and Brethren at Jerusalem*, Acts 15. who made and sent *Binding Decrees*, to the Churches. And what of this, brother? Therefore Nationall Churches, or generall

Church admit them into fellowship? And you know this is a

Councels, or Provinciall, have the like power to make and impose binding Decrees, and send them to the Churches? Why, first of all, that Assembly was not any Nationall Church representative. Secondly, neither was it a Generall or Provinciall Councell. Thirdly, being an Assembly of the Apostles, with the Elders and Brethren, it could not erre: for the Apostles had infallibility of judgment, being guided by the holy Ghost infallibly, and the Elders and Brethren did assent to their determinations. And was there ever such a Synodall Assembly since that? Had ever any Councell besides that, infallibility of judgement? Shew it, brother, and then wee will beleeve they may make *Binding Decrees*, and we will submit unto them. Nay, dare any Assembly of men on earth, say, *It seemed good to the holy Ghost, and Us?* That's enough for the black mouth of blasphemy, the Roman lying Oracle. But in your second thoughts, you traverse this * place more largely, which wee shall consider when we come to it. In the mean time, what I have here and before said, may suffice to stay the Readers stomach.

* Act. 15.

But you adde, All this is seconded with all *Oecumenicall, Nationall, Provinciall Councels, Synods, and the Church-government throughout the world in all Christian Realmes, States*, &c. Alas, brother, all these put together, are in no sort suitable to make a second to that Apostolicall Assembly; they cannot hold the least proportion with it, to make a second to that unsampled sample, though they make never so great a summe.

And whereas you make the up-shot of this your question, *to the apparent subversion of the Novell Independent Invention*, (these be your words) we have proved it to be neither mans *Invention*, but Gods own institution, nor *Novell*, as having its foundation in the New Testament; not yet *Independent*, otherwise then that it depends not upon any human authority, or jurisdiction out of it self; not upon any such conformity to humane *lawes*, or *customes*, or *manners* of every Nation or people, as you speak of. Neither doe you take away our Argument from the most usuall phrase of the Apostles calling the Churches in the plurall, by saying, *Historians often speake of the Churches in England*: for they doe not so speak when they mean the congregations, but the material Temples; but speake of England as one Church when they

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understand the people; and there hath not been shewen any dependence of those Churches, as the dependency of the *English* Churches is knowne.

The ninth Question.

Thus reduced in summe:

« That liberty which the Apostles had and used in ordaining, *Proposition.*
« supplying, instituting new Rites, Orders, Canons, &c. for the
« Churches peace and welfare, they transmitted to posteritie:
« But the Apostles had and used such liberty, &c. *Assumption.*
« Therefore the same liberty have all Churches in the world, *Conclusion.*
« in all ages succeeding the Apostles, in ordaining, supplying, in-
« stituting new Rites, Orders, Canons, for the Churches peace
« and welfare.

I answer to the Proposition: 1. That *the Apostles themselves had no other libertie* to doe any thing about the calling, planting, ordering, and regulating of Churches, but what they had immediately given them by Christ, and his Spirit. 2. This libertie so given them reached no further, then to those things onely which were given them in charge, and which they accordingly, as faithfull Stewards, did practise concerning the Churches. Even as Christ himselfe, being the *Son of God*, and *set over his house*, was *faithfull* in all things, doing nothing, but what he had by speciall Commission and Command from the Father. So as, if the *Son himselfe, God blessed for ever*, took not the liberty to himselfe to doe what himselfe pleased, as Mediator, though as the Son *he thought it no robbery to be equall with God* the Father; but did every thing as he had received commandment from him: how much lesse have the servants of God any libertie to doe what pleaseth them, but that, and those things alone, which they have in command from their Master. If therefore they who professe to succeed the Apostles in their severall generations, will challenge the same libertie, which the Apostles had and used about the Churches of God, they must first of all shew us their immediate Commission from Christ, as the Apostles had. Secondly, They must all shew us, that what they doe in Church-matters, under colour and pretence of Apostolicall liberty, is Heb. 3. 5.

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Church admit them into fellowship? And you know this is a

none other, but what they have by expresse command from Christ by his Spirit. And thirdly, because they are not able to shew this, they must use their liberty no further, then the lists and limits of Scripture doe permit, which holds forth an exact and perfect rule, for all precisely to observe, without the least variation. As knowing that severe law of God, often used in Scripture, and wherewith, as with a bounder-stone, the whole Book of God is closed up, and that with a solemn protestation of Christ himselfe: *If any man shall adde unto these things, God shall adde unto him the plagues that are written in this book; And if any man shall diminish ought thereof, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy Citie.*

Revel. 22. 18, 19.
So Deut. 4. 2. & 12. 32. Pro. 30. 6.

But some will haply object; This is meant, not in point of *Church-government, Discipline, Rites, Ceremonies, as left to mans libertie to ordaine, adde, supply, institute, according to the diversitie of the lawes and customes of every Nation*; but in matter of Doctrine, Story, and Prophecy. To which I answer (though sufficiently noted before, and now in one word) if God were so exact about the forme of the Tabernacle, (a type of Christs Church under the Gospel) to have all things observed according to the Patterne, even unto the least pin; what reason can any reasonable man give, why Christ, the same Law-giver, and patterne it selfe, should be lesse carefull over his Church in the New Testament, so as to leave it at six and seven, to the liberty of all *Kingdomes* and *Nations of the world*, to set up in the Church what *Government, Discipline, Rites, Ceremonies, Canons*, they pleased, upon what pretence soever, as for the *Churches peace and welfare?* Hath not the opening of this one sluce, let in such an Inundation of all manner of humane Inventions in this kind, as hath wel-nigh drowned the whole world in all manner of superstition and errour? Therefore, my deare brother *Prinne*, assure your selfe, not all the wits, not all the learning in the world, will be able to assert this your assertion, but that it must of necessitie fall to ground with its own weight; and there, brother, let it lie, or rather die, and bury it there, whence it came. All that Christ appointed is exactly to be followed, though Christ was not so exact in circumstantialls under the Gospel; because 1. that was a typicall and figurative worship. 2. Christ now looks more to

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substantialls, *Joh.* 4. 24. wherein he is more strict, 1 *Cor.* 5.

And where you say, that as in the *Apostles* times, *Christians multiplied*, so also their *Churches*, *Church-Officers*, and their *Church-Government*, *Discipline varied*: Consider, that here was no variation of the Rule; but by degrees the rule of Church-government and Discipline was perfected, not varied. The Temple was seven yeares in building, first hewing, squaring, then erecting stone after stone, timber after timber, each in his proper place, here was no variation of the frame and forme of the Temple all this while, but the worke went up day by day, till it came to perfection, according to the patterne in writing given to *David* by the Spirit. Even so, while the spirituall Temple is framing, the daily goings up of it by order after order, and rule after rule, is no variation, but a graduall tending to perfection, till all be finished; as we now see the whole frame of Church-government for all true Evangelicall Churches so compleated in the New Testament, as nothing under the paine aforesaid, may either be diminished, or added to it. And the same Orders are prescribed to all the Churches; *So ordaine I in all Churches*, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 17. So for the collection for the Saints, and for the first day of the week for publick meetings (as before) the same order he gives to the Church of *Corinth*, which he doth for the Churches of *Galatia*, 1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2. So Officers chosen and ordained in every Church, *Act.* 14. 23. *Tit.* 1. 5. 7. So as if one Church for the smalnesse of it have fewer Officers, and another Church for the largenesse of it moe in number (as the Church in *Jerusalem* had need of seven Deacons, both for the magnitude of the Congregation, and the multitude of the poore therein, *Act.* 6.) yet this makes no variation in the forme of Church-government, as differing one from another, either for substance, or circumstance, saving onely *secundum magis & minus*, as a little man is a man, as well as the tallest man. 1 Chron. 28.

In a word, those Arguments, which you by way of derision set downe in your owne forme of words, with their *Ergoes*, for as much as they are of your own devising, I therefore leave them with you to consider better of them. Onely one I cannot passe by, without wrong to Christ, to his word, to his Spirit, to his Apostles,

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Church admit them into fellowship? And you know this is a

Every man (say you) in his Infancy, is borne destitute of Religion, of the use of speech, reason, understanding, faith, legs, &c. *Ergo*, He ought to continue so, when he is growne a man.

Yet this is the maine Argument of some Independents; say you? O brother! Of what Independents? And whence this Argument? Because they hold, that in nothing they ought to swerve from the exact Rule, Gods Word, for the Government of Churches? And doe you compare the Scripture (as it was in the Apostles time) to a child in his Innocency, destitute, &c? So us, if we will not transgresse the bounds of Scripture for Church-government, we doe as much in effect, as argue, *Every man is in Infancy is borne destitute of Religion, &c. Ergo*, he ought to continue so, when he is growne a man? Wee dare goe no further, then the Scripture leads us, therefore we are a company of Infants. Good brother, call in these extravagants. 2. We say the Churches were as perfect then as ever since; they had all Ordinances, the most eminent Officers, the most large gifts, &c. and as many in a place called to the faith, as can be shewen in any one place since, to have come in voluntarily to the Gospel, *Act.* 2. 10. 12. *Chap.* 21. 20.

The tenth Question.

This Question is reduced thus;

Proposition. "Such as cannot produce any one solid reason, why they ought "not (in point of conscience) willingly submit to a Presbyteriall "Government, in case it shall be established among us, by the "generall consent of the Synod, and Parliament, as most consonant to Gods Word, the Lawes and Government of our Realme; "ought to be reputed to be in a high degree of Obstinacy, Singularitie, Arrogancy, self-ends, and peremptory Schisme.

Assumption. "But Independents cannot produce any one solid reason, why "they ought not so to doe, as aforesaid.

Conclusion. "Therefore Independents ought to be reputed to be in a high "degree of Obstinacy, Singularity, Arrogancy, self-ends, and peremptory Schisme.

Now truly brother, a heavy charge you lay upon those poore creatures you doe so becall *Independents*. As 1. of *Obstinacy*,

If

If that be *obstinacy*, against mens consciences not to yeeld blind obedience to mens commands in point of Religion. 2. Of *singularitie*: If that be *singularity*, for a few to enter in at the strait gate, and to walk in the narrow way. If that be singularity, to doe that which the multitude will not doe: to come under the Government of Christs kingdome, in the Government of our consciences, and of his Churches, which is a Principle, you your selfe in termes cannot, dare not deny. 3. Of *Arroganey*: If that be *Arrogancy*, for one Church not to exalt it selfe over another, or for Pastors not to lord it over their flocks. 4. Of *self-ends*: If that be *self-seeking*, which (if any other) is a self-denying, and a taking up of our crosse daily, as Malefactors ready to be crucified, as without which resolution we cannot follow Christ. If that be self-seeking, to strip our selves of the preferments and favours of the world, to be exposed naked to the reproach of all, to be accounted the out-casts of the world, and the *off-scouring of all things*, as at this day. And lastly, Of *peremptory schisme*: If that be schisme, whereby we ought to separate our selves from all doctrines contrary to what is delivered, *Rom.* 16. 17. and so farre as is possible, from all the rudiments of the world, from the Ordinances of men, which are * not after Christ, that so we might adhere to him, and * *walk in him*, being *taught by him*, as *the truth is in Jesus*.

Luke 9. 23.

* Col. 2. 8.
* Eph. 4. 21.
Col. 2. 6.

But now, that these *Independents* should undergoe all these, τὰ σκληρὰ, *hard speeches*, and yet not to be able to shew one solid reason for it, surely then, a fools cap and a bell were fittest for them. But I hope, brother, if you have but read hitherto, and well weighed in a just ballance, the many reasons we have already given you, perhaps in some of them at least, if not in all, you will find something, that may challenge the title of *solid*, in your clearer and more solid judgement.

Jude 15.

Now to your Argument. First of all I might deny the necessitie of the cõsequence of your Proposition. For it is not necessary that every truth should cease to be truth, because every one cannot shew a solid reason for it. The fire hath an essentiall form, and yet no man can find it out. It burneth, yet none can shew a solid reason why. The Martyrs some of them professed they could not dispute for that truth they held: but (say they) we can dye for it. And

Formæ rerum nesciuntur. Scaliger. Exercit.

vent, that none once admitted, should ever be cast out again. And brother, all this we hold to be our duty, for the preferring of the honour of Christ, and of his Ordinances, and of his

what if that Church-government, which your *silly Independents* hold, be a truth, and yet some of them not able to shew one solid reason for it? Must it therfore not be a truth? As the Apostle saith; Rom. 3. 3. *What if some did not beleeve? Shall their unbeliefe make the faith of God without effect?*

But I flatly deny your Assumption; and affirme, that your *Independents* both have, and doe, and can produce many solid Reasons, why they may not, ought not in point of Conscience, willingly submit to such a Presbyteriall Government, as you prescribe, because framed by the generall consent of a Synod and Parliament, *conceived* by them as consonant to Gods Word, the Lawes and Government of our Realme. One Reason is, *Consonant to Gods Word*, and *conforme to the Lawes of this, or any other Realme*, cannot stand together; as before is shewed. And the reason hereof is, because Christs kingdom is so transcendent, so absolute, distinct, *Independent*, (if you will) as it is not obliged to conforme and stoop to *humane lawes, and peoples manners*, as you put a necessitie upon it. A second Reason; because you require obedience to that, which men shall *conceive consonant to Gods Word, &c.* Touched also before, and now againe to put you in mind. And therefore upon this ground we ought not in point of conscience to subject and captivate our faith to mens opinions. A third Reason, why we may not doe it, is, because you require absolute obedience to the generall consent of Assembly and Parliament. Now we dare not pin our faith upon generalitie of mens opinions. The generalitie of the votes of the *Jewes* State carried it away, to crucifie their King. If the whole world might vote this day, the generalitie would be against Christ, as he is indeed the onely Anoynted King, Priest, and Prophet. What if the generality vote amisse, while yet they may *conceive* all to be right, because *consonant* to what they most affect? No, though orthodox and godly, as was shewed before in the instance of *Paphnutius* in the Councell of *Nice*. A fourth Reason; Because we acknowledge Christ alone to be Lord of our Conscience, and no power of men on earth herein to be joyned with him. *Harm. Confess. sect.* 11. *The Magistrate rules the body, not the mind.* And therefore we dare not subjugate our conscience to humane lawes, customes, and manners, as to Gods Word, with which you

remptory Schisme.

Now truly brother, a heavy charge you lay upon those poore creatures you doe so becall *Independents*. As 1. of *Obstinacy*.

you doe so equally yoake them. So as we answer you with the Apostles, when all the synedrion of the Jewish State with one generall voyce interdicted them from preaching in Christs Name: *Whether it be equall in the sight of God, to obey you rather then God, judge yee.* Act. 4. 19. A fifth Reason: Because the Holy Ghost by the Apostle expresly condemns all humane Ordinances in matters of faith and Religion, whereof Church-government is a branch, and a doctrinall part, so as mans law therein may not bind the conscience; As *Col.* 2. from *v.* 8. to the end of the chapter. Εἰ δόγματα, &c. A sixth Reason: Because it is Antichristian to deny Jesus to be the Christ, that is, the onely King, Priest, and Prophet of his Church. *He is an *Antichrist*, that denieth any of these three Offices. But to deny Christ to be the onely King of his Church, is to deny him in one of his Incommunicable Offices. And they thus *deny Jesus to be the Christ*, that place man with Christ in his throne, that set *humane Lawes and Customes of all Nations* cheek by jowle with the *Word of God.* Here *Jesus is denied to be the Christ.* I could here adde many more reasons to these: but these may suffice, that you may see there be some Reasons which your *Independents* can produce, and those so *solid*, as the Gates of hell shall not prevaile against. * 1 Joh. 2. 22.

But, say you, if we thus claime *exemption* from such *binding Decrees* of men in the matters of Christ, and *that in point of conscience*, then may also *Papists*, *Anabaptists*, *and all other sects claime the like exemption, upon the like grounds.* Brother, for that, I hope you will put a difference between orthodox Churches, and heterodox. But I say againe, for any mans conscience, be it never so erroneous, as that of Papists, yet certainly the conscience of such simply considered in it selfe, nor you, nor any man in the world hath any thing to doe, further then to instruct and admonish, and labour to enforme and rectifie: enforce it you may not.

Obj. But shall we tolerate Popery, and so Idolatry in our land?

Ans. I answer; It is one thing to tolerate Popery and Idolatry publickly in a land, and another to tolerate a man in his *Conscience.* Magistrates may not tolerate open Popery and Idolatry to be set up in the land: but the conscience of a Papist, they are no masters, or judges of. If the Civill Magistrate see any of Gods Commandements actually violated, *he beareth not the sword* Rom. 13.

vent, that none once admitted, should ever be cast out again. And brother, all this we hold to be our duty, for the preferring of the honour of Christ, and of his Ordinances, and of his

for naught; evill actions he must punish: but he hath no power over the conscience of any, to punish a man for that, so long as he makes no open breach of Gods Commandements, or the just lawes of the Land. And so in the rest. And, brother, in your twelfth Question, you confesse so much, reproving (but how justly) your *Independents* for *censuring the very hearts and spirituall estates of others*; and alledging that Scripture, that *forbids men to judge, because God onely knows mens hearts*. Now, brother, that which you deny to others, as to be judges of mens hearts, and spirituall estates, why will you either assume it to your selfe, or attribute it to others, by placing them in Christs throne, and thereby displacing Christ himselfe? As the Apostle saith, *Who art thou that judgest anothers servant? To his Master he standeth, or falleth.* Much more, Who art thou, that judgest Gods servant? And *ver.* 10. *And why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? We shall all stand at the judgement seat of Christ*. Christ therefore is the sole Judge of every mans conscience; even he alone, that is the Judge of quicke and dead. And brother, let me put it to your *Conscience*, Doe you thinke it equall, that either your conscience should be a rule of mine, or mine of yours? And if no one mans conscience may be the rule of anothers; certainly neither may all the mens consciences in the world be the Judge of any one mans. 2. However we finde neither rule, example, nor reason from Scripture, to force men to Religion originally; yet the Rabbins say, if man kept the seven precepts of *Noah*, he might not be forced further.

Mat. 7. 1.

Rom. 14. 4.

The eleventh Question.

Concerning this question, it containeth in it nothing but grievous invectives against the way you call *Independent*: You call it *a Seminary of schismes, and dangerous divisions in Church, State*: So did *Tertullus* the Jews Advocate against *Paul*, charge him for *a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews, throughout the world*, Acts 24. 5. You pretend to ponder it in the ballance of Scripture, or right reason; but you neither shew us Scripture nor right reason, to ballance it in. You call it *a Floodgate to let in an Inundation of heresies, errors, sects, libertinisme, and law-*

remptory Schisme.

Now truly brother, a heavy charge you lay upon those poore creatures you doe so becall *Independents*. As 1. of *Obstinacy*.

lawlesnesse, without means of suppressing them, when introduced. For this you bring M. *Williams* his bloody tenent. Now suppose him, or his book, hereticall: will you make the way of Christ so too? There was one *Judas* a traytor, shall therefore all the rest of the Apostles, or their Apostolicall calling, be so too? You alledge also *Anabaptisticall, Antinomian, hereticall, Atheisticall opinions*, as of the *Souls mortality, Divorce at pleasure*: will you therefore father all these upon Christs Kingly goverment? In *Luthers* time sundry heresies sprung up; was *Luther* therefore either the cause or occasion of them? Doe wee not know, that Mothes are bred in the purest cloth? And the dunghills send forth strongest savours when the Sunne shines hottest. Is either the cloth the proper cause of the moth, or the Sunne of the stinking vapour? Never greater errors have been, then since the Gospel hath clearly shined forth. True it is indeed, that these divisions, and diversities of opinions, are with bleeding hearts to be bewailed: But shall the Gospel of the Kingdome beare the burthen of all? This were, as with the Christians in Rome in *Nero's* time; when any judgement of God fell upon the citie, he would still impute it to the Christians, and punish them for it. But we are taught better. When the good Husbandman sowed pure wheat in his field, the enemy came and superseminated tares; shall we therefore blame the wheat, because the tares come up with them?

But that you impute to this way libertinisme and lawlesnesse: Good brother consider, are wee *Libertines*? or are wee *lawlesse*? Nay, may we not herein plead for our selves, that in all things we endevour to conform our selves wholly to the law of Christ: and if in any thing we offend justly any just law of the land, wee refuse not to suffer. Only, brother, let not that Imperiall Edict be revived, that if any confessed themselves to be Christians, they should be put to death; so such as you call *Independents*, should for this very name suffer. As *Tertullian* said, *Nomen pro crimine*, when the very name of *Christian* was taken for a crime. And for means of suppressing errors, what means could suppresse those many errors that sprung up in the successive ages of the Church? Was not the word of God the onely meanes, and not humane power? yea humane power is as well a meanes to maintain heresies,

vent, that none once admitted, should ever be cast out again. And brother, all this we hold to be our duty, for the preferring of the honour of Christ, and of his Ordinances, and of his

resies as to suppresse them You know what *Constantine* and his sonne did to maintain the *Arrian* heresie. And orthodox Independent Churches are as good means as any other; together with the care and countenance of the Magistrate, if it may be had, to defend them, and inable them to send forth labourers, without which the Presbytery will be as barren, breast and womb, as any other.

The twelfth Question.

The sundry passages of this question, as I finde them scattered along, I shall glean them, and so bundle them up for a conclusion at this time: For this question seemes to be a *Lerna* of Queries.

And first, you quarrell the Title of *Independencie*. Truly, brother, none of all those whom you thus intitle, doe at all glory in this name, so as to give you thanks for your so often stiling them thus in one poore sheet of paper, seeing they cannot imagine you doe it *bonoris gratia*, while every where you set it as a brand. Notwithstanding we are not so ashamed of it, as utterly to disclaim it; and that for two reasons. First, for distinction sake between us, and that which you call your Presbyteriall government. The second is, because this word *Independent* is to signifie, that we hold all particular Churches of Christ, to be of equall authority, and none to have or exercise jurisdiction over another, but that each Church is under Christs government, as the sole Head, King, Lord, Law-giver thereof. But we would not that you should give us this as a nick-name, or a name of reproach, or badge of scorn: nor that you should call us so, as if we denied subjection to civill authority in matters of civill government, nor yet that you should mean such an *Independencie*, as if we held not good correspondence with all sister Churches, by way of consociation, consultation, communion, communication, mutuall consolation, supportation, and (in a word) in all things, duties, offices, as wherin Christs Kingdom is held up, the graces of the Churches exercised, & the liberties of each Church preserved intire, which is the glory of Christ, which we have touched before. And therefore, brother, you mightily mistake the matter, when you interpret *Independency*, as not needing both the *Communion* and *assistance* of other *Persons, Nations, Churches*.

Then secondly you question, *Whether the Nationall Covenant doth*

remptory Schisme.

Now truly brother, a heavy charge you lay upon those poore creatures you doe so becall *Independents*. As 1. of *Obstinacy*,

It

doth not in ſundry reſpects ſtrongly ingage the Nation againſt Independency? Truly, brother, not at all, ſo long as all our Reformation is to be reduced to, and regulated by the word of God. And that is a ſure foundation, whereon our *Independencie* dependeth. In which *reſpect* the Nation is by the *Covenant ingaged for Independencie.*

Thirdly, you queree, whether if *Independency* (rightly taken ſtill, as before) if *ſtript of all diſguiſing pretences, be not Phariſaicall, vainglorious, ſelfe-conceitednesſe, &c.* Here, brother, you laſh us with a whip of many cords, but that our armour is proof. So you have done more then *ten times*, yea all along. And that all this ſhould come from a friend, a brother, a ſufferer, from a companion, & counſellor, how hard is it to be born? And you tell us of *diſguiſing pretences, if ſtript*, and for this, you have provided an *unmasking* for us. O brother, we have no ſuch *diſguiſings*, as to feare your *unmaskings*. Wee may in this boldly anſwer with the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſſ.* 2, 3, 4, 5. And for *Phariſaical, Spirituall pride, vain-glory, ſingularity, ſelfe-conceitednesſe of ſuperlative holinesſe*, which as dirt you throw ſo liberally in our faces; To this, brother, I will ſay no more but this: *Si ſat eſt accuſaſſe, quis innocens erit?* If a bare and malicious accuſation bee enough to faſten a crime, who ſhall be innocent? And did you ever enter into our hearts, to ſee what ſecret ſpirituall tumours, and apoſtumations be there? And if not, how come you preſently, in the very ſame ſentence, and with the ſame breath, to blow all this beſmearing duſt into your own face? For you charge us with *paſſing uncharitable cenſures upon mens hearts, and ſpirituall eſtates; of which* (ſay you) *God never made us Judges, and forbids us ſo to judge, becauſe he onely knows mens hearts* (as was noted before.) Now then, brother, why doe you thus judge *the hearts and ſpirituall eſtates of your brethren?* Conſider it well in cold blood. And, brother, what doe you ſee in the Independencie, that you ſhould thus judge them? *The Tree is known by the Fruit.* Are they ambitious of preferments, of glory of the world, of favour of great ones, of praiſe of men, that doe voluntarily forſake all, and *ſtrip* themſelves of all, to follow naked Chriſt? Phariſees indeed *loved the praiſe of men more then the praiſe of God.* That's Phariſaicall, ſo in the reſt. Therefore brother,

Nudum Chriſtum, nudus ſequere. Hieron.

vent, that none once admitted, ſhould ever be caſt out again. And brother, all this we hold to be our duty, for the preferring of the honour of Chriſt, and of his Ordinances, and of his

brother, tell not the world what malice may suggest unto you to think of us, but what you see or observe in us. And yet, brother, the rule of charity is, that you should first tell your brother privatly of his fault, before you blaze it to the world. But thus at least we come to know our fault. And what is it? Wee doe, (say you) *deem our selves too transcendently holy, sanctified and religious above others; that we esteem them altogether unworthy of, yea wholly exclude them from our Communion & Church-society, as Publicans heathens, or prophane persons (though perhaps as good, or better then our selves) unless they will submit to their Church-covenants, & government, refusing all true brotherly familiarity, society with them.* So you. Now, brother *Prynne*, I confesse I am one of those, whom you call *Independents*; and did you ever observe any such superciliousstrangenesse of carriage in mee towards you, and other of your and my friends, no lesse zealous against Independents, then your selfe, as you charge us withall? Have there not been many interchangeable invitations between you and me, with loving acceptations, whereby we have enjoyed mutuall society, in all friendly and brotherly entertainment, saving still some quarrels about this way, but ever parting friends? And more frequent had it been, had your occasions, and sometimes mine own, permitted. And neither at this day, since these your invectives came forth, (though they were no small griefe to me, and that even for your sake) am I become a greater stranger to you, either in face or affection, then I was before. For I am so perswaded of your good nature, that did you truly apprehend, and dive into the mystery of Christs Kingly government in his Churches and Children, certainly you would never have thus sharpened and imbittered your style against your brethren; the Lord open your eyes to see it. But however, brother, either be more moderate in censuring, or else censure not at all, without just cause.

But we *exclude* (say you) *as good or better then our selves from communion and Church-society with us.* Surely it may bee so; but, brother, we *exclude* them not; but they *exclude* themselves. And you give the reason, because they will not submit to the Churches government. But it doth not hence follow, that wee therefore deem either our selves *so transcendently holy*, (as you say) or others altogether

remptory Schisme.

Now truly brother, a heavy charge you lay upon those poore creatures you doe so becall *Independents*. As 1. of *Obstinacy*.

Kings of Judah, Israel, and Generall Assemblies, Princes, Nobles, chiefe Captaines, and Elders of the people, as when muster them

altogether unworthy. But, brother, we esteem the government of Christs Church so holy, as we cannot think them fit to be admitted (be they never so good) that think so slightly of the way, and of them that walk in it, that they refuse to agree to walk in this way with the people of God. Would you admit of a member into your family who is disaffected with your courses, and orders of the family? What cause then hath he to complain, if upon knowledge thereof you refuse to entertain him? If therefore every family should be carefull to provide for its own peace, by having all in it of like affection and judgement, (if possible) why not Christs owne house and family? And, brother, the truth is, (for we love no *disguising*, as to need any *unmasking*) wee love not in a time of reformation, after a generall tincture of superstition and will-worship, blindly to goe to work, to admit of all commers, and to cast Christs *Pearles* and *holy things* to such as we know not. Or if we be perswaded they be truly godly, and yet they are not perswaded of the warrantableneſse of this way, how can they with a good conscience desire communion with us? And if not, how can the Church receive them? Nor indeed doe any such offer themselves; nor doth the Church impose any such conditions, as a godly Christian hath cause not to accept. We desire to doe those things that please God, namely, such as he commends and commands. *Rev.* 2. 2. Christ commends the *Angell of the Church of Ephesus, for not bearing with those that are wicked, and for trying those that sayd they were Apostles, and were not, but were found lyers.* So some may come that professe themselves to be Christians, that is, to be godly, to be beleevers, but we dare not receive them without triall: if they refuse to be tried, we may the more suspect them. And what interest hath any to Church Communion, that is not a member, or to the seal, that is not in Covenant? And we love not to do that, for which to repent afterwards. We desire all our members may be such as they may peaceably and sweetly continue with us. We are loath to have the world offended by the unworthy walking of any one member. And we desire by our best providence to prevent, that none once admitted, should ever be cast out again. And brother, all this we hold to be our duty, for the preserving of the honour of Christ, and of his Ordinances, and of his

brother, tell not the world what malice may suggest unto you

Churches *in the beauties of holinesse.* Others may take a broader way, if they please; wee dare not. The Church and body of Christ is not of so slight account with us, as that we should carelesly and promiscuously admit of every one that offer themselves, without some triall of them, both for the Churches satisfaction, and for the account shee must make to Jesus Christ. How strict the Jews were, *Ainsworth* in *Gen.* 12. *v.* 17. relates out of the Rabbines. And even *Bellarmine* himselfe had such a cleare apprehension of the generall nature of Christs Church, (though himselfe did not experimentally and particularly know it) that hee useth these words: Ecclesia preeipuè, &c. *The Church especially and intentionally, gathereth onely beleevers, such as have true faith in their heart. And when any hypocrites are mingled among, such as truly beleeve not, it falleth out besides the intention of the Church. For if it could know them, it would never admit them; or being casually admitted, it would forthwith exclude them.* Thus *Bellarmine*; which he sets down as a most true speculative Principle (though but ill applied, and worse practised by him and his, and such like,) which yet all true Churches should be carefull to observe, and put in practice. And truly, brother, we desire to do this, that, if it be possible, no misbeleever, no prophane liver, no hypocrite be admitted a member of Christs body (though an hypocrite having his vizard on, may sometimes * creep in unawares into the Church) And therefore diligent circumspection is used for prevention. And *turpius ejicitur, quam non admittitur hospes: A guest is more fairly kept out, then cast out.* This, brother, is our course, that we hold in admitting of members; we think we cannot be too wary, though too strict we are not. We suspect the gold that will not abide the touch. A Christian name may silver over the copper, such as the Scripture calls *reprobate silver, Jerem.* 6. 30. Though we know each currant coin hath its allowance of allay; and each beleeving Saint so many grains allowance; but all sincere, no thing counterfeit. And as for Church-covenant, we have sufficiently spoken before.

Ecclesia praeipue & ex intentione, fideles tantum colligit, qui veram fidem in corde habent. Cum autem admiscentur aliqui ficti, qui verè non credunt, id accidit praeter intentionem Ecclesiae. Si enim eos nosse posset, nunquam admitteret, aut casu admissos, continuè excluderet. Bellar. de Eccles. l. 3. c. 10. See also D. *Field* of the Church, Book 1. cap. 7.

*Such were called of old. [illegible]. Euseb.

The last charge you lay upon Independencie, is, *uncharitablenesse, carelesnesse, and neglect of one anothers welfare, and the like.* Brother, for uncharitablenesse, let our practises, the best proofes of true charity, plead for us. We have manifested our love and loyalty,

Kings of Judah, Israel, and Generall Assemblies, Princes, Noble, chiefe Captaines, and Elders of the people, as you muster them

loyalty to the State, whereof we are natural and politicall members. For the safety thereof we have powred out our estates to the very bottome. We dare herein compare with all others of our rank and meanes. My selfe a poore man, am out for the State, between foure and five hundred pounds; and, I blesse God, I have done it with a cheerfull heart, nor for squint respects to lay out so much at once, to receive of the State so much annuity. Yet I speak it not to glory, but you have compelled me. And besides their means, none have more prodigally adventured and spent their lives for the State, then your Independents have; and for none hath the God of Battels appeared more. And but for stirring up envie (which needs not) I should put you in mind of *Marston-moore*. In a word, brother, we dare challenge all the world in point of fidelity to the State, and our native countrey. Where be they that more love, honour our Senat, Synod, Synedrion? Who pray more frequently, more fervently for them? So that herein you cannot say we are Independents, as for want of true love, and that of the best kind, to the publick Cause and State, from which our Independencie is so farre from separating our hearts and affections, with all our abilities to serve it, as that it hath cleared it self to be as fast & firmly united unto it, as any other whatsoever. And for true charitablenes, brother, where is it to be found, if not in those Churches you call *Independent*? But you will say, this love is among our selves. And God grant it may ever be so: Yet it ends not here, but extends to all. And, brother, for a close, I challenge you to shew me any one parochiall Congregation in *England*, wherein there is, or can be the like love one to another, the like care one for another, the like spirituall watchfulnesse one over another, the like union and communion of members in one mysticall body, in a sympathy of affections, in such a fraternitie as is described, *Psal.* 133. a lively type of a true Church of Christ. Till you shew us the like in any of your Parochiall Assemblies, consisting of your mixed multitude, good brother, restrain your spirit so mightily imbittered against us, lest in charging us with *uncharitablenesse*, your self alone be found to be uncharitable. And so I have done with your first *twelve Questions*.

brother, tell not the world what malice may ſuggeſt unto you to think of us [illegible]

A VINDICATION OF CHURCHES, COMMONLY CALLED *INDEPENDENT.* OR AN ANSVVER To Mr. PRYNNES ſecond Book.

MY deare Brother, to your twelve new Interrogatories I preſent you with a new Anſwer. I call it new, becauſe I ſhall cull out ſuch paſſages, as I find new, or not ſo much inſiſted on in your former twelve. Which as they are fewer, ſo I ſhall be the ſhorter, for as much as in the former, I have been the larger. But brother, I find not that in your Book, which you pretend in your Title, to wit, the *Unmasking of Independency*. Nor can we expect it of you; for in your Proeme you ſay, that *the Independents have not dogmatically, and in direct termes, diſcovered the full truth of what they aſſert*. If not, what kind of viſage will you diſcover, when you have taken off the maſk? Surely, by *your* handling of the matter, you mean to unmask ſome hags face, ſuch as pleaſed the Painter. Which when you have done, it will appeare to all the wiſe-hearted, that it is not the face of *Independency*, as wherein there ſhines forth ſuch a beauty, as it ſeemeth you yet never ſaw.

In your Preface to the *Courteous Reader*, you ſay, *We politickly conceale the principall grounds, and more deformed parts of our Church-Platforme, for feare of miſcarrying*. Good brother, who told you ſo? Remember your own leſſon before, *Judge not*. But indeed, had you reproved us (yet in love and meekneſſe) for not ſetting forth more fully a compleat Modell of this fabrick,

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brick, or spirituall house, it had been something. Which yet if it were done, you would not impute it to policy, that it was not sooner done. But when it is exactly done, you will find no deformed parts at all in it: but contrariwise a greater beauty then in that famous Temple that *Solomon* built, as being the spirituall Temple of Jesus Christ, so as I am sorry you are put to the paines of *pumping out our determinations* (as you say) *by your Questions*: When as you should rather find it as *a fountaine flowing forth in the streets*. But brother, how doe you write by *Question*, not *decision* (as you say) when your *Questions* prove to be *decisions*, as your former twelve are? And what doe you els, but *refute* upon *bare conjectures*, *Andabatarum more pugnando*, as those at *blind-man-buff*. For your Charges upon us are very sore, and (as many doe say) bitter, so farre beyond reason, as you are not able truly to say, Wherefore.

* Eph. 2. 21.

Prov. 5. 16.

For your first Question, *Whether the Independent forme of Church-government be any where to be found in the Old or New Testament*: this we have resolved in your former Twelve Questions: so as this is no new Interrogatory, unlesse you put the greater difference between *Questions*, and *Interrogatories*. And though it were in no antiquitie (which yet we have shewen before) nevertheless, if it be found in the Scripture (as there it is) whatsoever clouds of the mystery of iniquitie have darkened the lustre of it for so many hundred yeares: yet this cannot plead prescription against it. For if *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*: then surely no tract of time can prescribe against the law of Christs kingdome, which we finde upon sacred record. But where, say you? Why, brother, this House of God wherein Christ rules as King, stands upon so many Principles, as so many maine pillars, not to be shaken. As

1. It is a spirituall house, whose onely builder and governour is Christ, and not man. 1.

2. It is a spirituall kingdome, whose onely King is Christ, and not man. 2.

3. It is a spirituall Republick, whose onely Law-giver is Christ, and not man. 3.

4. It is a spirituall Corporation, or body, whose onely head is Christ, and not man. 4.

5. It

brother, tell not the world what malice may suggest unto you

5. 5. It is a Communion of Saints, governed by Christs Spirit, not man's.

6. 6. Christs Church is a Congregation called and gathered out of the world by Christs Spirit and Word, and not by man.

These Principles are such, as the Adversaries themselves of this kingdome of Christ, cannot, dare not deny. And out of these Principles doe issue these Conclusions.

1. 1. That no man is the builder of this spirituall house.

2. 2. That no man, nor power on earth hath a kingly power over this kingdome.

3. 3. That no earthly Law-givers may give Lawes for the government of this Republick.

4. 4. That no man may claime or exercise a headship over this Body.

5. 5. That no man can, or ought to undertake the Government of this Communion of Saints. *Item*, That none are of this Communion, but visible Saints. *Ergo*, a true visible Church of Christ cannot be defined, or confined to a parochiall multitude. *Item*, That, that Government of this Communion, is not extrinsecall, but intrinsecall, by the Spirit of the Word, and by the Word of the Spirit.

6. 6. That men may not appoint, limit, constitute what Congregations of all sorts they please, to be Churches of Christ, as Nations and Parishes.

Obj. But you confesse in generall, Christ to be the Builder, the King, the Law-giver, the Head, the Governour, the Caller, the Gatherer of his Churches.

Ans. If you doe, you must approve of those Churches you call *Independent*, as whereof Christ is the onely Builder, King, Law-giver, Head, Governour, Caller, and Gatherer. If you doe not, in denying Christ in these relations, you deny Christ in his absolute Regalitie.

But in your Answer to your Antiquerist, *pag.* 6. you doe in part grant Christ to be King internally in the soule, which, you say, *may passe for tolerable*. O brother! No more but, *may passe for tolerable?* You that are so large-hearted to your friends, are you so strait-laced to Christ? Surely, Brother, Christ is the full and sole King, raigning in the heart and conscience of every true beleever.

Kings of Judah, Israel, and Generall Assemblies, Princes, Noblest chiefe Captaines, and Elders of the people, as you muster them

soever. It were *intolerable*, not to grant this in its full latitude. But you absolutely deny Christs sole kingly Government, externall over his Churches. Brother, this is no lesse Christs kingly Prerogative, then the former. He that is King over every part of the body, must needs be King over the whole body. If therefore Christ be the onely King over every mans conscience, so as no man, nor power on earth, may sit with him in this his throne: then consequently by the self-same reason must he by the Word of the kingdome, as the onely Law thereof, exercise his kingly office over his Churches, so as no humane power or law may intermeddle to prescribe rules for the government, or forms of this spirituall house, and kingdome. For otherwise, if man should set up a forme of Government over the Church of Christ, to which all must conforme: then of necessitie should man be Lord over the conscience, which is the highest presumption against the most High. And then what mischiefes would follow? What intolerable tyranny over the conscience? Then must your words (*ibid.*) come to passe: *If a moderated or regulated Episcopacy, the same with Presbytery, should by the Synods advice be unanimously established in Parliament, as most consonant to the Scriptures, and most agreeable to the Civill Government, I shall readily submit unto it without opposition, and why not you, and all others?* So you. O brother, I stand amazed! But I goe on.

Then againe, the Scripture as it sets downe the qualifications of the members of this body, so the forming of them in the body in the parts thereof, more principall, and lesse, superiour and inferior, for order and well-beeing: As *Pastors and Teachers*, 1 Tim. 5. 17.
Teaching and Ruling Elders, *Helpes*, *Governments*, *Bishops*, and Phil. 1. 1.
Deacons, or by what other names soever they are diversified in 1 Cor. 12. 28.
Scripture. And this is one uniforme forme of Government, which Christ hath fixed in his Churches, without any difference at all, but *secundum magis & minus* (as before) as lesser Churches Act. 6. & 20.
have fewer Officers, greater moe. So as, brother, if the old *wine be better*, old *Presbytery*, old *unlordly Episcopacy*, surely the *Independents* doe justly challenge it: Which had you once truly tasted of, you would never have desired to drink other. The Lord remove that aguish humor. * *Vexatus febre recusat Optima.* * *Palingen.*

Your second Interrogatory is, about the lawfull power of Civill

brother, tell not the world what malice may suggest unto you

Civill Magistrates in all matters of Church-government, wherein you tax *some Independents* for extraordinary eclipsing the fame. *Some:* what some may say, is one thing, must therfore the *Independent* Church-government say it too? You alledge for this a passage in the Answer of two of the brethren to *A. S.* for wch one of them is lately questioned: but, I hope, he wil clear himself. But the weight of this whole Interrogatory lies in your Marginall note; where you peremptorily conclude; *That the chief Government and ordering of the Church, and power of making Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or Canons to bind it, before the Law belonged to the Patriarks and others, was not as they were Priests, but Rulers, and Fathers of their Families: under the Law (say you) it belonged to Moses, to the Kings of Judah, Israel, and the morall Assemblies or Congregations of the Princes, Nobles, chiefe Captains, Heads, and Elders of the people: Therefore under the Gospel, by like reason and equity, and because it is a part of Christs kingly, not Priestly, or Propheticall Office, it must needs belong to Christian Princes, Magistrates, Parliaments, to whom Christ hath delegated his kingly Office; not to Ministers, to whom he hath given onely his Propheticall or Priestly Authoritie, not the Royall, as the Scriptures at large relate: nor yet to particular Congregations, who are not Magistrates, nor higher Powers, invested with Christs royall Authoritie.*

So you, where you tell us many strange things, but prove nothing. But, brother, in such a weighty Argument as this, your *Assertion*, will not serve the turne: yea, you here overthrow those Principles forementioned, That Christ is the onely *King*, to the onely *Priest*, the onely *Prophet* of his Church; which his three offices are incommunicable to any creature, as they are proper and peculiar onely to him; He is the onely King, &c. Now to 1 Tim. 6.15. be *solus, ὁ μόνος*; *The onely Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*; this is Christs Regall prerogative, which is incommunicable to any, or to all the powers on earth. It is no lesse incommunicable, then his omnipotencie, his omniscience, his omnipresence, and the rest of his incommunicable Attributes; no lesse then his Mediatorship. Those Patriarchs and Princes of Israel before the Law, and under the Law, from *Adam* to Christ, never had this power or prerogative, to make Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or binding Canons; no nor yet *Moses*, nor

Kings

Kings of Judah, Israel, and *Generall Assemblies, Princes, Nobles, chiefe Captaines, and Elders of the people*, as you muster them up together in your marginall note. A seeming goodly Army indeed; but so many shadowes of men, for any such power they had, as you would with your pensull of ink paint out unto us. And first for those before the Law was given in *Sinai*: had they this power you speak of? *Cain* and *Abel* brought their Sacrifices. What? Was it a * will-worship of their own election? If so, God had regarded *Abels* sacrifice no more then *Cains*. How then? Their Sacrifice was of Gods own appointment: *Adam* had it from God, and his children from him. For as God revealed to *Adam*, Christ, so those Sacrifices, types of Christ. Whence the learned Interpreter *Calvin* saith, *Tenendum est, &c. We are to hold, that the manner of sacrificing was not inadvisedly devised by them, but delivered to them from God. For seeing the Apostle referres the dignity of Abels sacrifice, as attributed to faith, it follows, he offered it not without Gods commandement. So as it could not have pleased God, had it not been according to his commandement.* So *Calvin*. Nor is all here expressed: no doubt they had an *Altar* also, whereon to offer for the sanctifying and accepting the offering; which Altar was a type of Christ the true * Altar, to whom *Abels* faith had respect. Though we read not of Altar before *Gen.* 8. 28. We read also of difference of beasts clean, & unclean, *Gen.* 7. By all which it is evident, that God gave a law to *Adam* and his offspring, sutable to that in Mount *Sinai*, for a rule of divine worship; so also for Church-government. And this further appeareth by the Law in *Sinai* afterwards, where *Moses* is expressly charged to *do all things* (both for worship and Church-government) *according to the patern shewed him in the Mount*; as before we noted. And when the Temple was to be built, God gave to *David* an exact *patern* of all things, yea, of every particular, both in writing and by his Spirit, not onely for worship, but for the whole ministration about the Temple, a type of Christs Church under the Gospell, so as neither *Moses* nor *Kings of Judah*, had the least power to devise any other forme, then that prescribed of God. The keeping of the Passover once in the second month by *Ezechiah*, was extraordinary, upon a case of necessity. And for the *Kings of Israel*, will you equall them with the Kings of Judah?

Gen. 4. 4.

Col. 2. 23.

Calv. Comment. in Gen. cap. 4. *Tenendum est, non fuisse temerè excogitatum ab illis sacrificandi morem, sed traditum divinitus, &c.*

* Heb. 13. 10.

1 Chron. 28. 11, 12, &c. to v. 19.

may thinke there is something in it, that covetousnesse is not so predominant in us, as to corrupt our *Conscience*. And therefore

Had they lawfull power, as *Jeroboam*, to set up his two *golden Calves*, and so to change the form of worship & Church-government? When *that King Ahas* set up his *Damascen Altar*, was it by a Regall power invested in him from God? So of other Kings of Juda, good or bad, they had no lawfull power at all to alter the form prescribed of God, one jot. And therefore, brother, you are wondred at, that being a man of much reading, and mightie parts, you should utter such strange things (*ne quid dicam durius*) as these are, and that so confidently, when you neither doe, nor ever can bring the least proofe, yea or colour of what you affirm. And therefore your inference upon such empty premises, that *therefore under the Gospel, by like reason and equity*, it *must needs belong to Christian Princes, Magistrates, Parliaments, to whom Christ hath delegated his Kingly office*, &c. is no consequence. Whence I note two things: 1. *Like reason and equity*. Now in your premises there is neither *reason nor equity*, because no truth in them. 2. Christ hath not *delegated his Kingly office to any Princes, Magistrates, Parliaments*, to set up any form of worship or Church-government of their devising, or *conceiving*, no more then he did to all, or any of those you reckon up in the Old Testament. I pray God give you a better understanding in this mystery of Christ, and godly sorrow for these things. Take then the counsell of this great King: *Bee wise therefore, and understand; and kisse this King, this Sonne of God, by obeying him in all* that he saith, *as being* not onely the onely King, but the onely Prophet of his Church (as before) whom whoso *heareth* not *IN ALL THINGS*, *shall even be cut off from his people*. But how then doe you say, *This is a part of Christs Kingly office, not Priestly, or Propheticall*, to set up a government; and, *hee hath not communicated those other offices to Princes and Parliaments*: whereas Christ doth in all things regulate his *Kingly office* by his *Propheticall office*? And again, how say you, Christ hath not given his *Kingly office to Ministers*, but onely his *Priestly and Propheticall*; and yet you make an Assembly of Ministers as *Rector Chori* to be the leaders and guides to a *Form* of Reformation, and that necessarily? And denying such to bee Kings, or to have a *Kingly office*, you exclude them out of the Albe of those faithfull ones, whom Christ hath made a * *Royall Priesthood*, even

Psal. 2.

Act. 3. 22.

* *Kings*

Princes of Israel before the Law, and under the Law, from *Adam* to Christ, never had this power or prerogative, to make Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or binding Canons; no nor yet *Moses*, nor

Kings

* *Kings and Priests to God his Father.* But so much of this second Interrogatory. * 1 Pet. 2. 4. * Revel. 1, 6.

The third Interrogatory.

Touching this; 1. Wee assume not the power to gather Churches, but being sent or called to preach the *Word of the Kingdome*, thereby people thus called of God, come to be gathered into Church-fellowship, and so by consent doe chuse their Officers. * Mat. 13. 19.

2. Such as are thus called, to acknowledge Christ their onely King, were not begotten *to this acknowledgment* by such Ministers as you speak of, who deny, disclaime, and preach against Christs Kingly government over mens consciences and Churches. So as such a conversion as you speak of, comes not home to whole Christ: and such, with their converters, doe deny Christs Kingly government; what kind of converts call you these? Or at least and best they are converted but in part; and that main thing wanting, to wit, Christs Kingly office, they come up to by the preaching thereof.

3. Such Ministers, when they set up Christs government, may (being agreed upon by all sides) have those Parishioners again, that for want of it at the first went from them.

4. Our solemne Vow and Covenant obligeth us not to any thing that is prejudiciall to the authority of Gods word, and the libertie of a good conscience, considering how Churches are gathered out of all the world, not this place, nor that, not this house nor that, but out of * every nation, such as fear God, and * out of every house the sons of peace, & out of * every Citie or Town, all that receive the Gospel, are called and gathered to Christ. * Act. 10. 35. Luke 19. 6, 8, 10.

5. Concerning Christian liberty in joyning to severall Churches, as in the same house some to affect one, some another: you know what Christ saith, *Luke* 12. 51, 52, 53. And it is God that perswadeth *Japhet* to dwell in the Tents of *Shem*. Gen. 9. 27. And, brother, all that noyse you make all along, with extreame aggravations, as *Confusion*, *Distraction*, *implacable Contestations*, *Schismes*, *Tumults*, *&c.* What are they but the very out-cries which the Prelats ever used for the crying and keeping up of their

may thinke there is something in it, that covetousnesse is not so predominant in us, as to corrupt our *Conscience*. And therefore

 brother,

their Hierarchy, built upon the same sandy foundation. This is well noted in the *Harmony of Confessions, Sect.* 11, *Confession of Ausburg. These Senator-like Declamations though they be very plausible, and incense the mindes of many against us, yet they may be confuted by most true and substantiall arguments.* As, *All the Prophets and Apostles were true lovers of the peace and concord of Nations and people: yet were they constrained by the commandement of God, to warre against the Devils kingdome, to preach heavenly doctrine, to collect a Church unto God,* and the like. And, *The true doctrin of God, and his true worship, must needs be embraced and received; and all errors, that tend to the dishonor of God, must be abhorred and forsaken, though all the world should break and fall down.* And much more there.

6. Though we are fully perswaded by Gods Word and Spirit, that this our way is Christs way; yet wee neither doe, nor dare judge others to be reprobates, that walk not with us in it, but we leave all judgement to God, and heartily pray for them: we our selves have been formerly ignorant of it, therefore we pitie others.

7. Where you object, that *under pretence of Christian liberty, whole Houses, Parishes, Countries, may thus come to be divided into severall formes of Churches, as some for the Presbyteriall, some for the Hierarchicall, and so cause Schismes and ruines; or at least unavoidably subvert all ancient bounds of Parishes, all setled maintenance for the Ministery by tythes, &c.* Brother, for Christian libertie, who shall perswade the conscience, or who hath power over it, but he that made it, even God, the onely Judge thereof? And for differenee of mens judgements in points of Religion, how can it be avoided? And yet it followes not, that upon such differences should come ruine to a State. What serveth the Magistrate, and the lawes of a civill State for, but to keep the peace? And as for Parishes, will you allow no Churches but Parishes? Or are Parishes originally any other but of humane, politicke, and civill constitution, and for civill ends? Or can you say, that so many as inhabit in every Parish respectively, shall bee a Church? Should such Churches and Parishes then necessarily be Churches of Gods calling and gathering? Are they not congregations of mans collection, constitution and coaction meerly?

What

Princes of Israel before the Law, and under the Law, from *Adam* to Christ, never had this power or prerogative, to make Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or binding Canons; no nor yet *Moses*, nor

Kings

What Churches then? And as for Tithes: what Tithes, I pray you, had the Apostles? Such as be faithfull and painfull Ministers of Christ, he will certainly provide for them: as when hee sent forth his Disciples without any *purse*, or provision, he asked them, *Lacked you any thing?* They said, *Nothing.* Surely, *the labourer is worthy of his hire.* And as for Ministers maintenance by Tithes, I referre you to the judgment of your learned brother *Mr. Selden.* And as for your Independent Ministers, they plead no other maintenance then the New Testament holds forth, yet not denying the Magistrate and State a power to appoint maintenance for the preaching of the word, as is done in New England, to those that are not members of Churches. And where you charge them, for *having the faith of Christ in respect of persons*, as if they admitted the rich, rather then the poore: Brother, I hope it is not so with others; I am sure, not so with me. And lastly, for your marginall young *Interrogatories*: As,

1. *Of how many members each Congregation?* I am sure your Congregations admit neither augmentation nor diminution, but according to the capacitie of every Parish.

2. *Within what precincts?* Christs Churches are not limited either to place or number.

3. *What set Stipends allowed?* Sufficient more or lesse.

4. *When and where Churches should assemble?* For *when?* at times convenient. For *where?* Not necessarily in this or that place.

5. *Who shall prescribe extraordinary times of fasting, or thanksgiving to them upon just occasions?* If the occasion be the Churches peculiar Interest, the Church agrees upon the time. But if it be publick, concerning the Politick body of the State, whereof we are native members, in whose weale or woe we sympathize, either we keep dayes of our own appointment extraordinary, or if the Civill State command and appoint a day, we refuse not to observe it.

6. *Who shall rectifie their Church-Covenants, Discipline, Censures, Government, if erroneous, or unjust?* First, Each Church useth her best meanes left her of Christ, within her selfe. Secondly, If need require, she useth the help of Sister-Churches. Thirdly, If any other, as the Civill State, be not satisfied, shee * refuseth not to yeeld an account of her actions, being required. 7. *Shew*

* Act. 25. 11.

may thinke there is something in it, that covetousnesse is not so predominant in us, as to corrupt our *Conscience.* And therefore

7. *Shew us* (say you) *a sufficient satisfactory Commission from Gods Word for all they doe, or desire, before they gather any Churches.* Brother *Prynne*, you say you will pump out our thoughts: yet, it seemes, you will exanclate, pump [illegible] every drop that is in us. But stay, brother, you are not yet a Magistrate. And 2. we hope you will not take up again the Oath *ex Officio* to pump out all our secrets. And 3. Though I have for my part dealt very freely with you, as my brother, all along: yet give me leave to keep a Reserve, *Donec ad Triarios veniatur res*, untill it come to a dead lift, in case we shall be brought before * Princes and Rulers, to give an account of what we *doe, or desire*. And 4. you put us upon too unreasonable a taske, to satisfie you in all that we *DOE, or DESIRE*. First make your particular exceptions, and demands for this, or that: and then we shall know the better how to shape you an Answer, as you see we have here done. What are all your books of Law-cases, all the Volumes of the Casuists, to the resolution upon general grounds, of incident matters, which could not be ruled till they happened? and yet the Government of States is one, and the doctrine of the Scripture in all generally necessary poynts cleare. And we desire you not too too much to grow upon us, when you see we are so coming, and free.

* Mat. 10. 18.

The fourth Interrogatory.

This is much like the next before. For that was about *Ministers power to gather Churches*: this, *concerning the peoples power in uniting themselves in a Church, chousing their Minister, erecting such a Government, as they conceive most suitable to the Scripture. And so all manner of hereticks may set up Churches, and all manner of heresies, sects, be brought in.*

I answer, as before. A Church is a Citie of God, which by her Charter becomes a Citie, being called of God, and by the same Charter (the Scripture) chuseth her own Officers: and sets up no other government, but what her Charter prescribes. If any other doe otherwise, and doe pervert the Scripture, it is not to be imputed to the Church of Christ. Her liberties are no law for others licentiousnesse. It was so in the Apostles times, and the

Princes of Israel before the Law, and under the Law, from *Adam* to Christ, never had this power or prerogative, to make Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or binding Canons; no nor yet *Moses*, nor Kings

next ages after. The true Churches liberties were no true cause of so many heresies; no more then the Christians of old were the cause of the calamities of the Citie or Empire of *Rome*, because *Nero* and other Tyrants falsly charged them, and as injuriously dealt with them. Nor may we cast away the priviledges of Christians, because others abuse them. Yea, whether we use our priviledges, or no, errours and heresies will be. The Apostles, and Apostolick Churches, could neither keep, nor cast them out; as is shewed before.

But brother, where you say, that *if this liberty of setting up an Independent Church-government be admitted: then by the selfe-same reason, they must have a like libertie to elect, erect what Civil forme of government they please: to set up a new Independent Republick, Kingdome, &c. By the selfe-same reason?* Surely by no *reason* at all. Shew us a *reason* hereof, and take all. And you know, that *Republicks, Kingdomes* are *Independent*, though not of Churches *electing, erecting*. It is unsatisfiable injury, and extreame irrationality thus to argue; for hath Christ given the same command to his people, as such who are not of this world, nor their Kingdome, as he hath done to them in spirituals, which he commands them to practise whosoever forbids? 2. They set up no forme, but take that which is prescribed, which God hath not done in civill government, but left it free, 1 *Pet.* 2. *Rom.* 13.

The fifth Interrogatory.

Herein you make a comparison between *Presbyteriall* and *Independent Churches*; Why not that, as well as this? And if this, why doe we not shew solid proofe of it? I answer: We desire to enjoy ours, without making comparison with yours. For proofe we have shewed sufficient.

Then to a second *Quere*; the answer is, not the Minister alone, nor the Congregation alone, but both together admit members, and set up Christs Government, not their own. And however you make us a Conventicle, consisting of inconsiderable ignorant members; I beleeve, brother *Prynne*, when you shall have any thing to doe with the most contemptible of such Conventicles, as you esteeme us, you will not altogether find us such,

may thinke there is something in it, that covetousnesse is not so predominant in us, as to corrupt our *Conscience*. And therefore

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *Nationall Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour is due
* Rom. 13. 7. unto them, as Gods * Word commandeth us. And for a *Nationall Councell,* as this is, called to advise, not to be peremptory Judges in the matters of God over our consciences, wee denie not their due honour too, as they are pious, and learned men.
2. Where you would have them have the same power in a Parliament and Synod, that they have in a Church, if they be members, it is answered, that all power is restrained to its own sphere and place; so that we may have a greater power in another kind, and yet not that; as no Parliament-man hath the power of a Master of a family in the Parliament, though he have a greater.

The sixth Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* hath sundry branches: the answer whereunto respectively, will intimate what they be.

1. Wee say, as before, None of our Ministers doe by any *usurped authoritie gather Churches.*

2. We cannot conceive, that any law of the Land is against the setting up of *Christs kingdome* in the hearts of his people, and in those Congregations called and gathered by the voyce of his Word. Nor doth the Ministery of Christs word more in this, then it did by *John Baptist*, Christ himselfe, and his Apostles, when they called Christian Congregations out of the *Jewes Nationall Church.* Even the Imperiall heathen Roman Lawes gave way to the preaching of Christs kingdome, and gathering of Churches within their Territories, Provinces, Cities.

3. For *Church-government, Covenant*, wee have said enough before.

4. Concerning a *Nationall Church* also, we have spoke already in the former Answer. And I desire brevitie, and not to answer all your repetitions and aggravations, lest I may *nauseam movere.*

5. It is one thing for a State to set up a new forme of Ecclesiasticall Government, and another to pull downe the old. This they were bound unto by the Word of God: but not so this, unlesse it be the same Church-government which Christ set downe in his Word; besides which none other ought to be set up,

Princes of Israel before the Law, and under the Law, from *Adam* to Christ, never had this power or prerogative, to make Ecclesiasticall Lawes, or binding Canons; no nor yet *Moses*, nor Kings

up, though never so much pretended. and by men *conceived* to be *according to Gods Word*, when made *suitable to the Lawes, Customes of every Nation, and manners of the people*, as you affirme; of which before.

Lastly, This *Church-government*, which we professe, you shall never be able to prove *ridiculous* and *absurd*, as you conclude your *Interrogatory*.

The seventh Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* is about the *dismissing of members*: 1. to become *members of Presbyterial Churches*: 2. Or *of other Independent Churches*. I answer, If any will desert their Congregation, who can let them? Yet it is the Churches care and duty to preserve it selfe, and all the members in unity of the body; and also from whatsoever may be sinfull. If any shall repent, and fall back, Churches are not more free, then * Christ himselfe was. If any for conveniency sake, or necessary occasion, desire to joyne with some other Church, doe you think it unreasonable, first to acquaint the Church with their desire? And doe you not allow of Letters of recommendation, when any is to passe to other Churches? May not els jealousies and suspicions arise, and heart-burnings between Churches? Do you not remember, what divisions and emulations the want hereof did cause among the Churches of old? And, brother, we desire to doe all things in love. And we desire *that others should doe no otherwise unto us, then we doe unto them*: as you object. You twit us againe, for *respecting the rich, more then the poore*. If it be true, it is * our fault, and ought not so to be: if not true, it is yours, and that so often as (as you doe) you cast it in our dish.

* Joh. 6. 66.

* 1 Cor. 11. 22.

The eight Interrogatory.

This Interrogatory is to charge us, *for not admitting to Baptisme any Infants of such Parents, who are not members of our Churches*. And, brother, you make this a most hainous and intolerable thing. Why, you know, if we would admit of all, it would be no small benefit and advantage to us, especially when we are to deale with *rich* mens children, such as you say we have in such *high estimation*. Therefore that we doe it not for rich men, you may thinke there is something in it, that covetousnesse is not so predominant in us, as to corrupt our *Consciences*. And therefore

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *National Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour [illegible]

brother, let some charitable thought take place in you, that we doe it rather of *Conscience* then of *Covetousnesse*. And what say you to this, brother? We preach Christ to the Parents. We preach him no lesse a King, then a Priest and Prophet. We preach him the onely King of our Conscience, and the onely Law-giver and Governour of his Churches. We exhort them to set up this King in their hearts. Wee exhort them to become and professe to be
* Revel. 15 3. those Saints, of whom he is King. For *he is* * *King of Saints*. But, brother, they will not beleeve us; they will not depend upon Christ, as the onely Lawgiver, and King over their consciences. Now, what would you have us to doe in this case? Baptize the Infants of such Parents, as will not, in this respect, professe, nor confesse Christ to be their King? Why, doe you not know, that no Infants have any title to Baptisme, that are not within the Covenant visibly? And how are they within the Covenant visibly, but by vertue of their Parents faith outwardly professed? And what outward profession of faith in the Parents, that refuse Christ for their onely King? that are ashamed, or afraid, to professe to be in covenant with Christ, as their King? If therefore the Parents professe not, yea refuse thus to be in visible Covenant, can the children be said to be in visible Covenant, and so to have a right to Baptisme, the externall seale of the Covenant? Brother, here is *obex*, a barre put.

Obj. If you say, *The child shall not beare the iniquitie of the father.*

Ans. True; but the Parents keep themselves off from the covenant by refusing Christ, in whom alone the beleever hath right to the Covenant; and so the child is withall kept off. For it is not now under the Gospel, as it was from *Abraham* to Christ, The covenant was made with *Abraham* and his seed, so as by vertue hereof all the male Infants of beleeving *Abraham* were and ought to be circumcised. But now under the Gospel, those onely are accounted *Abrahams* seed, who professe the faith of *Abraham*, which faith looked upon Christ, and embraceth whole Christ in all his offices, and professe the same outwardly, *Rom.* 10. 9, 10. So as the Covenant is entayled onely to beleevers now, and so to their children (as *Act.* 2. 39.) If then the Parents by refusing Christ as their King, as the *Jewes* did (*Luk.* 19. 14.) doe hereby cut themselves off from the Covenant, they do therewith cut off

their

their children too: and this not to be recovered in the child, untill either the Parent be restored, or the child coming in time to believe, and to professe the faith of Christ, doe hereby claime his right to the Covenant, and so to Baptisme, as being a * childe of *Abraham*. Let this suffice for the present, why we dare not baptize the children of those Parents, that refuse to professe the faith of Christ, as their onely King, as well as their onely Priest and Prophet. For Christ divided, becomes no Christ to the divider. This is, according to the vulgar Latin translation, (1 *Joh.* 4. 3.) *solvere Jesum*, to dissolve Jesus, that is, to receive him only in part, and not in whole. Which is the spirit of Antichrist. Besides, willing disobedience to any good order in a Church, deprives a man of the liberties of the Church: (for so he may not eat of the provender, that will not undergoe the yoake) Now this of a voluntary profession to walk with the Saints of such a place, according to Christ, is a thing so just, as following the example of the old Church, who were in particular Covenant with God. 2. In the New, they professed their giving themselves to God, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. 3. All societies require some promise of their members. If it be said, we are members of the universall Church by faith and repentance: we reply, 1. this faith must be shewen by a voluntary giving our selves to Christ visibly, and then to some Church of his, if opportunitie serve; for Christ will not have his people to be wandring sheep, when they may have a fold; nor to be *individuas vagas*, when they may be reduced to order.

* Rom. 4. 11. 16

The ninth Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* lays a charge upon *Independents*, for *refusing to admit to the Lords Supper such as are not notoriously scandalous, nor grosely ignorant, but professe repentance, &c.* which you say, *is a very uncharitable, arrogant, yea sinchristian practise, contrary to Christs own example in admitting Judas to the Lords Supper*; Also to that of Paul, 1 Cor. 11. you calling it also *a transcendent straine of tyrannicall usurpation over soules and consciences, and Gods Ordinances, worse then our most domineering Lordly Prelates, &c. yea Lording over Christ himselfe, and more then ever the Apostles did, but onely by their extraordinary calling, &c.*

I answer in one word (omitting your copious aggravations, and sharp censures) that we look further, then to a generall profession

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *National Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour

fession and conversation, namely, to their faith in Christ, that it be found intire, and whole, and namely, whether they hold him to be as the onely Prophet and High Priest, so the onely Prince of his People, the onely Lord, and Lawgiver to every mans conscience, and over every Congregation or Church of his Saints. If they thus acknowledge not Christs kingly office, as well as his other offices, we doe not, we dare not receive them. And what have they to do with the seales, that refuse by covenant to own Christ for their King? As for *Judas*, he received the sop, not the supper; for, *after the sop, he went out* * *immediately*, saith *John*. So as it appeares, the other Evangelists relate some other passages by *hysteron proteron*, as is not unusuall in Scripture story. And none of them saith, that he received the Supper. And suppose he did: the Churches Censure had not yet past upon him: onely *John* by a secret signe knew he was to be the traytor. For that of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. that was a true Church, though now disordered; and the Apostle refers the redressing of their abuses to themselves. The case is otherwise here, so as all your accumulated calumniations fall to ground. And concerning the Apostles extraordinary calling, if we must expect the like calling, we must not in the meane time admit of any, either to Baptisme, or to the Lords Supper; neither should there be any gathering of Churches at all; as some from hence doe gather. Besides, what shall the authority be, that *Luther* gathered the Churches by, and those that followed him? and what lawfull gathering then have the Reformed Churches?

* Iohn 13. 30.

For your marginall note of *Moses, David, Solomon, about settling Religion by Gods own direction*: herein you come home to that I said before, alledged against your unlimited law. But in that you now restraine by their example, all *Church-government to the Civil Magistrates*; you must make it out by holding close to the rule, that is, *To settle Religion by Gods own direction*, as you here confesse, and *not to elect, erect a forme of Religion, and Church-government, such as they shall conceive suitable, &c.* as before you told us. And *Moses, David, Solomon*, were all types of Christ, who put an end to all such. And while you there exclude the Priests from having any thing to doe in *Reforming*, or *advising*: What will the *Assembly* say to you? But they may advise, you will say. But the Priests might

might do nothing, but according to Gods preſcript law; no more then *Moſes, David, Solomon*. And if the *Prieſts* (as you ſay) *had no ruling votes*: then by this reckoning, what *votes* do you allow the *Aſſembly*-men, in their mixt Committees with the members of Parliament, or in the *Aſſembly* it ſelfe? Reconcile theſe I pray you.

The tenth Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* queſtions, or rather (as all the reſt) concludes, that that Text (*Mat.* 18.15,16,17.) is not meant of any Eccleſiaſticall cenſure, as of Excommunication, but onely of the civill Court of Juſtice. Brother, if you did ſpeake here as a Divine, and not meerly as a Lawyer, you would not have, againſt the judgment of moſt learned Divines, ancient and modern, and not Papiſts, &c. ſo interpreted this place. And what ſpeak I of Divines? The Text it ſelfe is its own cleareſt Interpreter. For it is immediatly added (v. 18.) *Verily I ſay unto you, whatſoever you ſhall bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever you ſhall loſe on earth, ſhall bee looſed in heaven.* Which is without controverſie ſpoken of Church-cenſure, or of the *power of the Keyes* in exerciſing Church-diſcipline; as that (*Matth.* 16.19.) is ſpoken of doctrine, as the learned *Calvin* well obſerveth. So as this very context cleareth the former to bee meant of *Church-cenſure*, as it was among the Jewes. You alledge on the contrary, that learned Lawyer whom wee all honour for his learning. Good brother, I could wiſh that all this zeale of yours againſt Independents, might not ariſe from any jealouſie, as if Church-cenſures ſhould prejudicate or trench upon your pleadings at the Barre of civill juſtice. Farre be it, that we ſhould have our motion beyond our own Spheare. Content your ſelf with your own Orb, and we ſhall confine our ſelves to ours, I dare warrant you. Again, to what purpoſe do you urge this interpretation of this Text againſt us? Do not all the Presbyterians expound it ſo? And if this Text, which is made the great pillar of Presbyterian excommunication, be taken off, you leave no more to a Claſſis then we, *ſcil.* to conſult and adviſe. And with this foot you have daſhed all the milk you gave them.

The writings of *B.* and *Eraſtus* one againſt the other are extant.

The eleventh Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* is to perſwade us, that in that *Aſſembly*, or *Evangelicall Synod* (as you call it) Acts 15, *the Apoſtles voted not as they*

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *National Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour

they were Apostles infallibly guided by the holy Ghost, but rather as they were in their ordinary capacitie, as Elders and chiefe members of it. Whereupon (producing your six reasons for it) you peremptorily conclude, *that there is an undeniable Scripture-authority for the lawfulnesse, use of Parliaments, Councels, Synods, under the Gospel, upon all like necessary occasions; and for their power to determine controversies of Religion, to make Canons in things necessary for the Churches peace and government, maugre all evasions, exceptions (of Independents) to elude it.*

But let us examine your *six reasons*, why the Apostles sate not as *Apostles*, but as *ordinary Elders*, &c. Where first, we lay this ground for the contrary, *scil.* that they sate as Apostles, because not ordinary Elders, as Elders, can say, *It seemed good to the holy Ghost and to us.* But the Apostles, as Apostles, might say so, because in any doctrinall point they had the promise of the Spirit, to bee *led into all truth*, as upon whom the Church was to bee built, *Eph.* 2. 20. Secondly, if they sate as ordinary Elders, then their decrees did no further bind, then as they might appeare to agree with Scripture; otherwise Elders, as Elders, may bind the conscience, let the decree bee never so wicked. But to your reasons:

First, *For else* (say you) *Paul and Barnabas being Apostles themselves, might have decided that controversie at Antioch, without sending to Jerusalem. Answ.* 1. By your favour, brother, *Barnabas* was not (to speak properly) an *Apostle*, though an *Apostolicall man.* 2. They argued with these Legalists at Antioch, sufficiently to convince them; but they comming from Judea, and pretending the use of circumcision, and *Moses* Law, to be still in force in the Church at Jerusalem, and the controversie being between two great parties, the Christian Jews, and Christian Gentiles; hereupon the *Church at Antioch* thought it requisite, for the fuller satisfaction to all parties, to send *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the *Apostles and Elders* at Jerusalem. And 3. because *Paul and Barnabas* are thus sent, doth it follow, that they were not sufficient (yea *Paul* alone, as an Apostle infallibly guided by the holy Ghost) to have decided the question at Antioch? As no doubt sufficiently they did, though not so satisfactorily to all. And 4. that they are thus by the Church at Antioch sent to

the

the Apostles and Church at Jerusalem: here is a good example for the use of communion of Churches, as in doubtfull cases to consult one with another.

2. *Else* (say you) *the Church at Antioch would have sent to none, to resolve their doubts, but to the Apostles onely, and not to the Elders.*

Answer: In that they sent to the Elders also, it shewes the respect that one Church should have to another. 2. Those Elders were men endowed with the gifts of the holy Ghost. 3. Though they had not infallibility, as the Apostles had, yet their assent to the determination, was a witnesse-bearing to the truth thereof.

3. *Else* (say you) *Paul and Barnabas would have put the question to the Apostles onely, not to the Elders and Church, as well as to them*, vers. 4, 5, 6.

This is answered in the former.

4. *Else the Apostles would not have called all the Elders and brethren to consult*, v. 6. *when themselves might have done it alone.*

Answer: 1. Though the Apostles might have done it alone, yet they would not, but called together the Elders and Brethren, yea, and the whole Church at Jerusalem (vers. 4, 22.) thereby to give a precedent to all Presbyters, or *Elders of Churches*, that in cases of difference arising, they call the whole *Church* together, for assistance and counsell therein. 2. In so doing, the Apostles diminished nothing of that Judicial power and authority which Christ left with them for deciding of controversies, being infallibly guided by the holy Ghost, while they thought it not fit to doe such things in a corner, which concerned the whole Church.

5. *Peter and James* (say you) *would not have argued the case so largely, and proved it by Arguments and Scriptures, as they did, one after another, but have peremptorily resolved it without dispute, had they sate and determined it by their extraordinary infallible power.*

Answer: This followes no more then the former. For the Arguments they used, with the conclusion, were by the direction of the holy Ghost. And 2. The holy Ghost is not so peremptory, but will have his truths examined by the Scriptures, as *Acts* 17. 11. The *Bereans* are commended by the holy Ghost for examining *Pauls* Sermon by the Scripture, though hee were an Apostle, and spake by the holy Ghost. And 3. the Churches assent was taken in for a witnesse *ex abundanti.*

6. *The*

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *National Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour

6. *The finall resolution* (say you) *Letters and Canons of the Synod, had run onely in the Apostles names, had they proceeded onely by their Apostolicall infallible authority, and not in the names of the Elders and brethren too.*

I answer: There is as little reason in this, as in all the rest of your reasons: for then by this reason sundry of *Pauls* Epistles, which were all dictated by the holy Ghost, did not proceed from that infallibility of Spirit alone wherewith the Apostle was guided, because we find others, not Apostles, joyned with him. As (1 *Cor.* 1. 1.) *Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Sosthenes a brother, to the Church of God &c.* And 2 *Cor.* 1. 1. *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy a brother, to the Church, &c.* And *Gal.* 1. 1. *Paul an Apostle, &c. and all the brethren that are with me, to the Churches of Galatia, &c.* So *Phil.* 1. 1. *Col.* 1. 1. 1 *Thess.* 1. 1. *Paul, and Sylvanus, and Timotheus, to the Church, &c.* In all which places, though there was but one Apostle, guided with infallibility of the holy Ghost to write the Scriptures, yet many brethren are joyned in the salutation of the Churches; and yet *Paul* as Apostle, did write those Epistles, and not simply as a brother, or fellow-servant with them of Jesus Christ. Neither are those brethren (so named) accounted the Pen-men of the Scripture, as *Paul* of right is. Thus you see, brother, there was no necessity, that either the Apostles names should be put alone, because they only were guided by the Spirits infallibility: or that the names of the *Elders and Brethren* should not be put, without a necessary conclusion deduced thence, that *the Decree there was* therefore *binding*, as being the *Decree of a Synod, and so exemplary for all Parliaments, Councels, Synods, to make the like binding Decrees.*

But (good brother) for all your punctuall quotations of the Scripture, you doe not all this while tell us (which is the main of all) that which we find in the 28. verse of that chapter, IT SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST AND VS, TO LAY VPON YOU NO GREATER BVRTHEN, THEN THESE NECESSARY THINGS. Now, brother, we challenge you to shew us any *Parliament, Councell, Synod,* ever since the *Apostles*, that could or can say thus, IT SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST AND VS, *to determine controversies of religion,* or

make and impose Canons to bind all men, &c. Shew this to us, at this time, and we will obey. But if you cannot, as you never can, never let any man presse upon us that *Scripture*, that *Synod*, which hath no parallel in the whole world, and so is no precedent, pattern, or any *Councell, Synod, Parliament*.

Let me conclude with a passage of the learned and famous *Chamierus*, that grand Antagonist of *Bellarmine*. *Bellarmine* upon the same Scripture you alledge (*Act.* 15.) (as also our late Prelates have usually done) would deduce the same conclusion, that you doe, for humane authority in binding mens consciences. To which *Chamierus* thus answereth: that this *consequence holds not: Quia non eadem sit authoritas Apostolorum, & reliquorum Ecclesiæ Pastorum: Because there is not the same authoritie of the Apostles, and of other Pastors of the Church. For with those the Holy Ghost was extraordinarily present: so as what they propounded, did simply proceed of God. But other Pastors have no such extraordinary assistance of the Spirit: and therefore their Decrees are not to be paralleld with the Apostles Decrees. Which is a speciall difference in binding of the conscience, which hath it selfe for witnesse, and God for the onely Judge: therefore, when it hath any thing commanded of God, it must needs stand bound.* Where (*inter cætera*) is to be noted, That *God is the onely Judge* and binder of the Conscience. The great question in controversie at this day.

Panstratiæ Catholicæ. Tom. 3. De libertate Christiana lib. 15. c. 10. De prohibitis Idolothytis, sanguine & suffocato. Illis aderat extra ordinē spiritus sanctus adeo ut quæ illi proponerēt, a Deo simpliciter manarēt. Atq; liquis Pastoribus adsistentia spiritus nulla extra ordinem: itaq; ne eorū quidē sanctiones eodem loco habitæ cū Apostolorum sanctionib⁹. Præcipuā autē discrimē in obligatione Conscientiæ, quæ se testem habet, Deū solum Judicem, ideo cū habeat aliquid imperatum a Deo non potest non obstringi.

Obj. But you will here object, That although (as before you say of Priests) a *Councel*, or *Synod*, have not this authority to make and impose binding decrees, yet a Parliament hath; and you deduce it from this Synod, *Act.* 15.

Answ. Now truly, brother, by your favour, this doth no way hold proportion, that that which you call a Synod (as a patterne for binding Decrees) should not qualifie a Synod of Divines with the like power, and yet transmit it over to a Parliament for binding authority over the consciences of a whole Nation: surely that Apostolike Assembly, or Church-meeting, was neither a Parliament, nor Diet, nor Senate, nor any such thing, that you should build any such power of Parliaments upon it, for the making of binding Decrees over the consciences of men. Therefore, good brother, be not so peremptory, but take in your top-sail, too high to bear up against so stiffe a gale, both of Scripture and Reason. But I come to your twelfth and last Interrogatory.

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *National Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour

The twelfth Interrogatory.

This *Interrogatory* is concerning the *lawfull coercive power of Civil Magistrates in suppressing Heresies, &c.* Or, *setters up of new forms of Ecclesiasticall Government, &c.*

For answer hereunto, Wee do acknowledge and submit unto the lawfull coercive power of civill Magistrates, according to the Scripture, *Rom.* 13. But brother, however, you must distinguish between mens consciences and their practices. The conscience simply considered in it self, is for God, the Lord of the conscience, alone to judge, as before. But for a mans practices, (of which alone, man can take cognizance of) if they be against any of Gods Commandments of the first, or second Table; that appertains to the civill Magistrate to punish, who is for this cause called, *Custos utriusq; Tabulæ, The keeper of both Tables*; and therefore the Apostle saith, (*Rom.* 13. 3, 4.) *For Rulers are not a terror to good WORKS, but to the evill. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? DO that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for hee is the Minister of God to thee for good; but if thou DO that which is evill, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for hee is the Minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that DOTH evill.* So as we see here, what is the object of Civill power, to wit; *actions, good,* or *bad.* Not bare opinion, no thoughts, not conscience, but *actions.* And your self *exempts the preaching of the Gospel and truth of God, from being restrained by the civill Magistrate.* But now brother, the time hath been, and somewhere is, and will be, that the * *truth of God* hath been *with-holden in unrighteousnesse*, and by the civill Magistrate punished with death, being condemned for heresie. And you see in these dayes, great diversities of mens opinions and judgements: one judging thus, another so; you think my way erroneous, and I may do as much for you. But do you or I, *DO* that which is evill, in actually breaking of any of Gods commandments, or any just lawes of the land? then we lie open to course of civill justice; but so long as wee differ only in opinion, which of us shall be punished first? or which of us is in the error? you write books, I write against them; yet *sub judice lis est*, who shall be Judge? you? or I? surely neither. Among other things, you would have *the civill Magistrate to suppresse, restrain, imprison,*

* 2 Thes. 2.

confine,

confine, banish the setters up of new forms of Ecclesiasticall government without lawfull authority. It may be you will involve me in the number. But what if I prove that which you call *a new form*, to be the *old form*: and the lawfull authority of setting it up, to be of Christ? Must I therefore undergo all these your terrible censures, because you so judge? What if your judgement herein be altogether erroneous? What punishment then is due to him that condemnes the innocent? you may be a civill Judge one day; remember then, brother, that if I come before you, you meddle not with my conscience, nor with mee for it. If I shall offend any of your just lawes, punish mee and spare not. But if you should make a law like to that of the *Jewes*, that who so shall confesse Christ to be the Son of God, and the only Lawgiver, Lord, King, Governour over Consciences, Churches, and not man, not Assemblies, not Councels, or Senates, though *after much Fasting, Prayers, Disputes*, (as you say) I confesse, I shall be apt to transgresse that law; but yet take you heed how you punish me for that trangression, with an *Ense recidendum*, or I wot not what club-law. So ends your Book, and so my Answer.

Now brother, you have since published a third Book, partly in answer to your first Answerer, and partly touching Mr *Joh. Goodwin*; I leave the parties interessed to acquit themselves; Only your stating the Question in the conclusion of the Book, I could not omit. You state it thus: *Whether a whole representative Church and State, hath not as great, or greater Ecclesiasticall Jurisdiction over the whole Realm & Churches, with all the members, then any one Independent Minister or Congregation challenge over their members.* Brother, I answer, if you can prove your Jurisdiction good, we will easily grant it to be greater. But if the Jurisdiction of the Churches you call *Independent* be good, as having Christ for the founder and owner of it, as we have cleerly proved, then certainly, it will prove the greater: For, *magna est veritas, & prævalet*: for Christs kingdome shall stand up, when all opposite earthly kingdomes, like earthen vessels, shall with his iron rod be dashed in pieces: This for the Clause.

Another passage in the same Book, is touching my person: where you say, *That none of us three-brethren-Sufferers, suffered for opposing Bishops legall authority, or any Ceremonies by act of Parliament established*: Here brother, give me leave to answer for my self:

First,

such, as you are pleased to terme us. And for *National Parliaments, States,* wee honour them with whatsoever honour

First, for all manner of *Ceremonies of humane ordinance*, imposed upon the conscience in the worship of God, I openly, for the space almost of a twelvemoneth, immediately before my trouble, preached against them, every Lords day, out of *Col.* 2. from the 8th verse to the end of the Chapter; so as when I was summoned into the High Commission Court, the Articles read against me were not only for my two Sermons, *Nov.* 5th, but also for those other Sermons against the *Ceremonies*: so as this might challenge to be one ingredient in my censure in *Star-Chamber*, and no less then a pillory matter.

And concerning my opposing of Bishops themselves, not only their extravagancies (for which I also was censured, and suffered) you may remember one passage in that Book, *For God & the King*, affixed to the *information*; *Were there a law in* England, *as was among the Locrians, that who should come to propound a new law, he should come with a rope about his neck; I would be the first my self, to petition the Parliament, that the government of Bishops might be abolished, and another set up more agreeable to the Scripture*, (although I confesse, were I to make such a proposition now, I should much alter my style as the condition of this present time differs from that, I should mount much higher.) And do you not think, brother, that this helped to put the Hang-mans knife (though not the halter) so close to the very root of mine ears, that it opened the wider sluces for the blood to stream out (with yours my dear Fellow-sufferers) to fill the Whores cup, and make her drink and spue, and fall, and rise up no more? Although the more cautelous and self-wise, or discreet any of us (but especially) my self then was, to avoid the fear of men, or force of law, certainly now, brother, it abates so much the more of the honour of that suffering; and the lesse honour, the more *shame*. But take we the shame to our selves, and give we all the honour to whom it is due; and brother, wherein we then came short, let us now make it up, by being zealous for our Christ, in labouring to advance the throne of his kingly government in all our souls, and over all the Churches of the Saints, and with those four and twenty Elders, cast our selves and crowns before him that sitteth on the throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for ever more. Amen.* And let this be our main contention, who shall most honor Christ, and most love one another, *Farewell.*

Rev. 4. 10.

FINIS.

JURA CLERI:

OR AN

APOLOGY

For the *Rights* of the long-Deſpiſed

CLERGY,

Proving

Out of Antient, and Modern Records,

That the Conferring of *Revenues*, *Honours*, *Titles*, *Priviledges*, and *Juriſdiction* upon *Eccleſiaſticks* is Conſiſtent with Scripture, Agreeable to the Pureſt Primitive Times, and Juſtified by the Vſance, and Practiſe of all Nations.

By

PHILO-BASILEUS PHILO-CLERUS.

Ἱερωσύνη δὲ τὸ σεμνὸν ἐν ἀνθρώποις Ἀγαθῶν ἀναβλαστικὸς.
Ign. Ep. ad Smyrn.

Sacerdotum Splendor, & Exiſtimatio haud dubiè ad ipſius Religionis gloriam redundat, nec fieri poteſt, quin Religio illa ſordeat, cujus Miniſtros Populus deſpicit. Gabr. Sionita.

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